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Henr. Aldrich

VICE-CAN. OXON.

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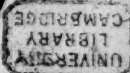
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PRESERVATIVE AGAINST SOCINIANISM:

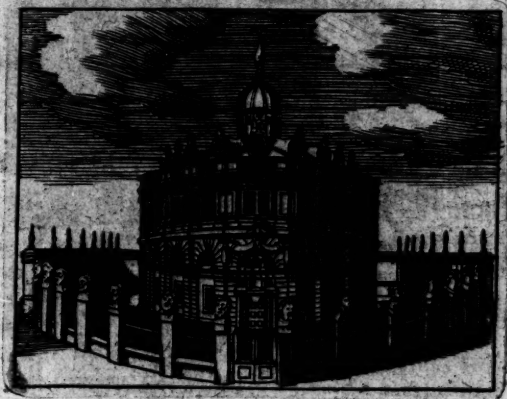
SHEWING
The Direct and Plain opposition between
It, and the Religion Revealed by
God in the Holy SCRIPTURES.



THE FIRST PART.

By JONATHAN EDWARDS D. D. and
Principal of Jesus Coll. OXON.

The Second Edition.



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T H E P R E F A C E.

TH*O* Custom bath in some sort made it necessary to entertain the Reader with a Preface, before he enters upon the perusal of a Book, shewing the design, and the occasion of Writing of it; yet in this case I hope there will be no need, either to Court his Favour, or Mollifie his Displeasure, for undertaking the Defence of Christianity against the great and dangerous opposers of it. For this being the common cause in which every man who is called by the name of Christ, hath an Interest, he may I hope without begging pardon, or if he please without shewing any Reason, engage in maintenance of our holy Religion, embraced by the whole Church of God, as well as by that of which he is a Member; against all such, who shall either openly oppose, or secretly endeavour to undermine it.

Here every man is a Souldier, and by his Baptismal Vow, having bin listed under Christs Banner, is obliged to fight under it, against all the Enemies of his Savior; and such are the pernicious Opinions here represented, which carry in their forehead an open, and declared Hostility, and direct opposition to the Divinity, and the Cross of Christ. The adversaries of our Holy Religion have taken the Confidence to publish their Impious Opinions, not only without Leave, but in Opposition to the just Authority, and the known and standing Laws of this Nation: they have revived the Opinions, reprinted the Books of some former Socinian Writers, which had almost bin
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forgotten, but they have taken care to refresh our memories; and all this hath bin done in defiance to the Government, as well as in the Face of it.

It hath bin as the occasion of trouble to all Good men, so likewise matter of Wonder and Enquiry to all Considering men, to find the Nation pester'd with such numbers of Socinian Books, which have swarm'd all upon a suddain, and have bin industriously dispersed thro' all parts of the Kingdom; whereby many weak and unstable Souls have bin beguiled, and their minds corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ.

Who they are, who have bin the secret abettors and promoters of these Antichristian Doctrines as it is variously discoursed, so I shall not Curiously Enquire; least by Roaving and uncertain Conjectures, the Innocent may be mistaken for the Criminals. Only this I think is so evident, that it may be taken for granted; That since there have bin no considerable numbers of men formerly, that we know of, who have openly and avowedly professed the Impious tenents of Socinus; They must have lain lurking under some other outward name and profession, watching the first and most convenient opportunity to divulge their Opinions, which for some just and weighty reasons no doubt, they thought fit for some time to stifle and conceal. I think there are scarce any among us so foolish as to imagine, that like Cadmus his Off-Spring (tho' without doubt the Old Serpent hath had no small hand in this Affair) these men should spring out of the Ground; or as some have fancied of Woodcocks, that they have dropped out of the Clouds among us: it is therefore beyond all doubt, that they have lain hid and disguised under the denomination of some other Sect or Party, and Profession.

But among other persons or parties concerned in this Affair, it would be a Miracle, greater than any of late years pretended to be wrought in France for the Conversion of the poor Hugonots there, if the Papists should not be engaged in it: who never as yet have stood by as unconcerned Spectators, when any mischief was in contrivance against our Church: But have always watched, and laid hold on the fittest Opportunity, of Sowing and Increasing Divisions among us; and who have by a late Experiment sufficiently convinced the World, that they have a much better Knack, at Unsetling and Disturbing

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Disturbing our Religion, than in Establishing and Defending their own.

No question it must afford matter of no small Sport and Entertainment to them, to find a Generation of Men, or Vipers rather shall I call them? risen up in their stead, who may tho' by different methods, at length perfect that design which they have bin long since projecting; viz. the Ruine of this poor Church, and the destruction of that Holy and Excellent Religion, which by Gods Right Hand hath bin Established, and hitherto wonderfully preserved among us.

But whatever the Causes have bin of this suddain Appearance of Socinianism, or whoever were the Authors that have secretly and in masquerade, abetted and encouraged it; much of which lies as yet in the dark; the pernicious effects of it have bin, and are, at this day too Visible. The minds of men, as we said before, throughout the Nation being strangely corrupted; Infidelity and Scepticism universally prevailing. Some deriding all Religion, which they either laugh at as the effect of Folly and Superstition, or detest as a meer Cheat and Contrivance of some Cunning and designing men.

Others profess themselves Enemies to Revealed Religion, speak opprobriously of the Holy Scriptures, deride the Sacred Pen-men of them, and make but a jest of any thing that is said in vindication of their Authority and Inspiration.

A Third sort seem to own, and profess to believe the Bible, yet oppose, nay not only so but Ridicule all the Great Mysteries of our Religion; such as are the Doctrines concerning the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, the Redemption of the World by the Merit of his Death and Sufferings; the belief of which have bin hitherto looked upon to be the Badge and Mark whereby Christians have bin distinguished from Jews and Mahometans.

Lastly, a Fourth sort there are (for you must know there are several Ranks and Orders of these Enemies of our Religion) who receive the Holy Scriptures as we do, and Believe, at least they tell us they do so, all the Great Mysteries of our Faith contained there; but yet at the same time they take care to let us know, that the belief of these is not necessary. So that whether you are a Believer or an Infidel in these matters, it makes no great difference;

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rence; forasmuch as the Honour of God, the Welfare of Religion, and the Salvation of your own Soul, is not concerned either one way or other. And if so I am sure no wise man ought to trouble himself, much less to give others any Trouble about such Trifling and Inconsiderable Opinions. And these I look upon to be the greatest and most dangerous of all the forementioned Enemies, forasmuch as by the Observation of all Ages, it hath bin found a much surer and speedier way, to ruin any cause by betraying than opposing it; and that you may much easier guard your self from the Open Hostility of a professed Enemy, than from the Treachery and falshood of a pretended Friend.

To prevent therefore if it be possible (and I hope it is not too late to Attempt it) the Growth and Progress of that Infidelity which is to be found in many; That Coldness and Indifference about the Great and Sacred Mysteries of our Religion, which is to be observed in others; All which are the blessed effects of Socinianism; and which seem to have diffused themselves among all Orders and Ranks of men among us, beyond the Example of former times; It hath bin Judged an advisable course, to shew the plain and direct opposition, that is between the Doctrines of Socinus and those which are revealed by the Spirit of God in the Holy Scriptures; and especially in the Writings of the New Testament. And this, among such especially who have not extinguished all Regard for Religion, may, as it is hoped, be of some good use, to fortify them against the Infection of these pernicious Errors, which have already spread like a Gangrene.

Our Writers generally have bin Employed, and that very Commendably, and for the most part with great success, in vindicating our Holy Religion, from the Bold and Impudent Cavils of these Hereticks; and so have stood upon the Defensive part. Now it may be thought, for many good Reasons, advisable, to make an Offensive War upon these Infidels; and to bring it into their own Territories. That is, that the charge of Unreasonableness and Impiety, which they with Equal Falshood and Impudence, have laid at the door of the Christian Religion; should be retorted upon their New, and dangerous Opinions; which upon Examination will be found to be Opposite to Piety, Repugnant to plain Reason, and in the conclusion

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clusion such as will conduce to the Overthrow of all true Religion. And to discover this, (which I hope in some measure is done in them) is the design of these following Papers; viz. That the Religion of Socinus as opposed to Christianity is both Impious and Absurd. So that fairly to represent Socinianism will be the best method that we can take to Confute it; and rightly to state the Controversy, will be the speediest way to put an end to it.

I confess as to the point of Reason, the Socinians have laid such a claim to it, as if they did intend to Engross and Monopolize that to themselves, which yet, tho' in several degrees, is the Right and Inheritance of all mankind. And for their attainments in this, they have so magnified themselves, and have bin so undecently as well as unjustly magnified by others; that many innocent and well meaning men have bin afraid to enter the Lists with these Sons of Anak, these Champions of Infidelity. But I dare venture to assure the Reader, he needs not fear to encounter these Gyants upon the plain square of Reason, notwithstanding all their Boasts and Brags of it. And I think it may be easily made out, that in Opposition to some Important Articles of our Faith, upon pretence of their Repugnance to Reason, they have advanced some other positions, so contrary to Reason; that when they come to be compared, I believe it will be found, that there is scarce any thing in Popery, not excepting that Gross Fulsome Doctrine of Transubstantiation; which contains greater Absurdities, more opposite to, and incomprehensible by natural Reason. Particularly what they say concerning the Factitious Divinity of Christ, is by far more unconceivable then what the Papists aver of the change of the Elements in the Eucharist. And any man that bath abilities to judge of these matters, will upon enquiry find; that it is less Absurd and Impossible, if there are Degrees of Absurdity in Contradictions, and of difficulty in things that are Impossible; that a piece of Bread should be Transubstantiated into Flesh, than that a man should be Transformed into a God.

In short tho Reason be the Idol of these men, yet I must desire to be excused if I do not stand in any great awe and admiration of it: and truly for my own part, I should much rather fear the Malice then the Reason of a Socinian, at any time. And I am
afraid

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afraid, that if ever these men (Quod avertat Deus) should gain strength and numbers among us; they would prove one of the most Cruel and Sanguinary Sects, that ever yet disturbed the peace of the Church. It is not to be denied, but that they have in their Writings advanced some parts of Christian Morality to a great height, and have spoke many and deservedly great things, concerning forgiveness of injuries and patience under them, in compliance with the commands, and in Imitation of the Example of our Blessed Saviour: But I should be loath to trust a Socinian for all that; and if we were forced to make the Tryal (tho I hope we are in no danger of the experiment) I doubt not but we should find, the forgiveness of these Men more Implacable than the Revenge of others: and that their meekness and moderation would have more terrible effects, than the rage and fury of the Arians and Donatists, in ancient times. And that the Reader may not think I utter this without ground, tho I have a great many, I will at present offer but one reason for my conjecture, and that is taken from their Boisterous, Impudent, Scurrilous way of treating the great and adorable mysteries of our Religion; which shews what usage the professors of them would in all likelihood meet, if they ever had them in their power.

The Blessed Trinity is by some of them styled Triceps Cerberus, and the doctrine concerning it they have ascribed to the Invention of the Devil, and tell us that it was fetched from Hell. Sometimes they will speak very honourably of our Saviour, but at other times, and upon other occasions so reproachfully of his divine nature, that they treat him worse then either the Jews or Romans who condemned and Crucified him. And tho they pay Divine Honour and Adoration to him, yet that doth not take off the guilt and impiety of their Sacrilegious denial, and as far as in them lies Despoiling him of his Divinity; but herein they transcribe the Copy which the Roman Souldiers before mentioned set them after his Condemnation by Pilate, who put a Crown upon his head, and a Scepter into his hand; and yet at the same time they Spit in his Face and Buffeted him.

One would think that the great and venerable mysteries of our Religion, entertained by all the Wisest, and Learnedst, and best Men and Churches, in all ages ever since Christianity was first planted in
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the World; tho they had bin Errors, yet had deserved to be treated with a little more Civility and Respect, than these men have shew'd in their Writings: who have wanted something else besides a good Cause to defend: for they have wanted Modesty and Civility in the Defence of a very bad one; have wanted the Candor and Ingenuity of a fair adversary; and have treated the mysteries of our Faith with such a Prostitute, and Impudent Scurrility; that we cannot well tell what reply to make to them; except in Imitation of the blessed and meek Arch-Angel Michael, we should desire God to Interpose in his own quarrel, and to rebuke the Blasphemies of these men, but to have mercy upon the Blasphemers.

To Conclude all, as there is no danger at present, God be thanked, that we should be frighted out of our Religion, so I hope we shall not be wheedled out of it, by any of the Artifices of these seducers who lye in wait to deceive; nor by any other specious pretences that they may make; no not by the pretence of Peace, which I know hath sometimes bin offered in their behalf. I confess peace is a most desirable thing, the blessings that attend it are so great that we cannot tell how sufficiently to value, and so many, that we can scarce number them. So that all humble and truly pious Christians should be content to part with any thing to obtain it.

But I must recal that last word, for upon second thoughts I find it may be too dearly purchased; as it certainly will be, when bought at the expence either of Truth or Justice; without which, Peace tho otherwise the most useful and excellent, would prove one of the most pernicious and mischievous things in the World. And when I speak of Truth I chiefly and principally mean those fundamental Truths which are treated of in these following Papers, the Belief of which have hitherto bin looked upon by most Christians, to be necessary to our Salvation: and if there be any Truths of that Importance I hope every man will consider, that tho Peace be much to be desired, yet that it is not advisable for him to hazard his Salvation to secure it.

When all is done the reputation of being esteemed a Peaceable and moderate man will stand a man but in little stead when he comes to appear before the Tribunal of Christ, and there to be charged with the guilt of betraying his Religion, and at the same time, the Souls

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of them committed to his charge, to endless perdition and ruin. In one word, tho Peace be so great a blessing that a man might be content to lay down his Life, yet no man should lay down his Soul for the sake of it. And tho a Pious man might in some cases commendably submit to Death, yet no wise man, nay indeed no man not out of his wits, would venture upon damnation to Obtain it.

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Socinianism.

IN all ages ever since the first planting of a Christian Church in the world, God for many wise reasons hath thought fit to exercise it with various and different sorts of tryals. The Apostles who were immediately commissioned by Christ, and sent to teach all Nations, and thereby to bring them over to the belief and obedience of the Gospel, (according to the prediction of their blessed Master in the 10th. of *Matth.* who had forewarned them of it,) met with great and violent opposition, and that both from *Jew* and *Gentile*, who with an extraordinary zeal or rather fury, set themselves to oppress and stifle this new doctrine, if it were possible, at its first appearance, and before it had gained much ground and footing in the world.

But besides the open force with which the enemies of it endeavoured to destroy the Christian doctrine, the Apostles and other Ministers of it, met with another and more dangerous opposition from some false brethren, who did not aime so much at the destruction of the Christian faith, as by some undue mixtures to corrupt the purity of it. Such were the Judaizing Christians, who tho they embraced the doctrine of the Gospel, yet still they retain'd a weighty affection for their old Religion and the law of *Moses*, to the observance of which they thought themselves under an indispensable obligation, and not only so,

but would oblige all other Converts to the like observance; and their zeal in this matter occasioned no small trouble to the Apostles, and disturbance to the Churches, where they first planted the Christian faith. See *Acts* 15. and *5. Gal.* And tho this was a matter of no small concern, and might in the conclusion have proved of dangerous consequence, yet it was not considerable in a manner, if compared with many other execrable opinions and practices, which began very early to be introduced into the Church, by *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*, *Menander*, *Saturninus*, *Basilides*, and *Carpocrates*. Succeeded afterwards by *Valentinus* and *Marcus*, *Marcion*, and *Hermogenes*, and a long train of *Hereticks* shall I call them? or *Hobgoblins*; for so I think they might well be styled, if we consider either the darkness and ignorance of all religious matters with which they were encompassed, or the wild pranks which they played, to the great disturbance of all good men; who were all descended from that son of perdition *Simon Magus*, who was their Patriarch and Ring-leader. It were a difficult task to muster up the names, but almost an endless attempt to reckon the senseless and extravagant opinions of these *Hereticks*; by reason of whose pernicious ways, the way of truth was evil spoken of. For many of the objections of the Heathens against Christianity, tho all of them were false, yet were taken from the execrable opinions and practices of these lewd miscreants, who thereby brought no small disgrace upon the Christian Religion, and put no small stop to the growth and propagation of it. But not to prosecute this matter any farther, if we descend a little lower, we shall find that God had no sooner dissipated the storm that hung over the Christian Church for some Centuries; and put a stop to the effusion of any more of that blood, (which without any distinction of Age or Sex, was spilt like water under the ten famous persecutions) by the advancement of *Constantine* to the Empire; but the devil betakes himself to new shifts: who finding his former methods of cruelty so signally baffled by the patience and constancy of the Martyrs, he begins to play a new, or rather to revive his old game, and since he cannot destroy the professors of Christianity, he will endeavour to undermine their Religion.

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He had indeed made a vigorous effort, to extinguish both the name and memory of the Christian Religion, and to have tore up both the faith and the believers quite by the very roots; but herein he was disappointed, and therefore he endeavours to compass that by stratagem, which he cannot effect by storm; and in this method he finds greater success than in the former. For being baffled as we said before, in his attempts upon the disciples of Christ, he attacks the doctrine which they embraced: and here *Inimicus homo*, the enemy came and sowed tares among the Wheat; hoping thereby to choke the word, which now he despair'd to extirpate. And herein he found fit instruments for the execution of his design; for taking advantage of the ambition and curiosity, the discontent and revenge, and other disorderly passions of *Arius*, *Photinus*, *Nestorius*, *Eutyches* and others, he soon prevail'd with them to assist him in the project which he had laid, for corrupting the doctrine and thereby disturbing the peace of the Church. For they presently broached many dangerous opinions, whereby they did either plainly deny, or some other way pervert the doctrines then generally entertained by the whole Church, concerning the natures and the person of the Son of God.

But these errors having long since bin buried in the Western Church, and lay forgotten in a manner with their Authors, were again unhappily revived at the beginning of the Reformation, by the endeavours chiefly of some Polanders and Italians in the last age, and among them principally of *Faustus Socinus*; who having gathered up the dangerous errors of *Paulus Samosatenus* and *Photinus* chiefly, against the divinity of Christ, he put them together in one body, together with those of *Pelagius* in the point of original sin, and those other doctrines which are supposed to have a necessary dependance upon it.

And herein *Socinus* seems chiefly to have chosen *Pelagius* for his pattern. For the other Hereticks, I mean *Arius*, *Photinus*, and *Macedonius* being content with the denial of those fundamental doctrines, concerning the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost, or with their particular Errors about the natures and person of Christ, as *Nestorius* and *Eutyches*; they did not attend to,

or at least did not draw out those doctrines into all their pernicious consequences, which might when clearly understood, overthrow all the other parts of the Christian doctrine. But *Pelagius* gave us a systeme of his Divinity, and drew out his Errors into a greater length, in opposition to several important parts and branches of our Religion; chiefly that which concerned the doctrine of Original sin, which naturally lead him into those other dangerous mistakes, which did by consequence overthrow the necessity of the satisfaction made by Christ, and the redemption of the world by the merit of his death and sufferings, as the Fathers, and particularly St. *Austin* directly charge him. For he was master of reason enough to consider where it was that his first error would naturally lead him, and he was content to follow it, and thereby fell into that Labyrinth of errors, from which with all his skill and sophistry he could not disentangle himself; for when pressed with the arguments of his adversaries, and the authority and tradition of the Catholick Church; tho he could and did find as many shifts and tricks as any other, to escape the force and conviction of truth; yet his former and fundamental error in denying the imputation of *Adam's* sin, and the original guilt and stain of our natures contracted thereby, hung like a dead weight about him, and sunk him down into those impious opinions which he broached concerning the grace, of God, and the liberty and freedom of mans will in religious matters in opposition to that Grace; concerning the nature and efficacy of the Sacrament of Baptism, the merit of good works and the justification of a sinner, the nature of Gods law and the possibility of raising to a state of perfection in this life, by yielding a perfect obedience to it, &c. all which having been picked up by *Socinus*, together with what was deliver'd by the other Hereticks, against the divinity of the Son of God, and the Holy Ghost, he hath at length given us the most perfect systeme of Heresies, in opposition to the doctrine of the Gospel, in almost all the parts and branches of it, that ever was ushered into the world. And indeed to give him his due, tho in point of time and standing he was inferior, yet in point of skill and management, that

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is, in the art of Heresie, he was superior to all that went before him, most of whom were but fools and bunglers in comparison. For many of the ancient Hereticks had several extravagant and incoherent notions, which had no more connexion between one another, then the parts of a rope of sand: so that like a company of mad and hair-brained people, they attacked the Christian Religion with great fury, but it was at randome and without skill; flinging about their mad opinions like wild-fire, with which indeed they did a great deal of mischief, but it was at all adventures, without order, and as one would imagine, without any certain aim. But *Socinus* comes more gravely and leasurely to work, and what *M. Cato* said in another case of *Julius Caesar*,² may be applyed to him, *Sobrius accessit ad perdendam religionem*. Like a man that had his wits, tho, as many think, not the fear of God about him, he comes more soberly and with greater deliberation to destroy the Christian Religion: he puts his opinions into better order, his errors are better united, and have as far as the nature of error would allow, for the most part, a good correspondence between one another: like a wary and well disciplined Captain, he puts his arguments into good array, levels his Batteries against the great mysteries of our Religion, and chiefly against the eternal Divinity of the Son of God: as well knowing that if he can succeed in his attempt upon that, he may promise himself an easy and cheap victory over all the rest of our Religion; and therefore having, as he thinks, effectually overthrown that main and fundamental Article of it concerning the ever blessed Trinity, he is resolved to follow his blow, and to pursue his imaginary conquest in that point, to the overthrow of all the other parts of the Christian doctrine. He saw where *Arius*, *Photinus*, *Nestorius*, &c. were wanting, who having, as was said before, contented themselves with their particular errors concerning the natures and person of Christ, as persons who thought they had done mischief enough, they seemed content with what they had done, and went no farther. But *Socinus* in imitation of his be-

1 *Ad evertendam Rempublicam sobrium accessisse*. Suet. in Jul. Cæs.

loved *Pelagius*, enlarged our prospect into his Religion, and from the principles which he laid down, he drew out his conclusions to a greater length: for having denyed the Trinity, and particularly the eternal divinity of our Saviour, with it he could not avoid denying his satisfaction, and the redemption of the world by the merit of his death and sufferings; having disowned the personality of the Holy Ghost, the necessity of his grace, and the efficacy of his operations upon the minds of men, must at the same time fall to the ground. Together with these he hath published many dangerous errors concerning the nature and attributes of God; concerning his prescience and providence in the government of the world; concerning the creation of man and the fall of *Adam*, and that corruption of our natures which is the consequence of it; concerning justification, and faith which is the means of obtaining it; concerning the Church, its nature and the notes whereby it may be distinguished from all other societies; concerning the ministry and the persons to whom Christ hath committed the care and government of his Church; their distinction and authority to preach the Gospel, and to exercise discipline in it; concerning the Sacraments and the end of their institution, and particularly concerning the nature and efficacy of Baptism and the Lords Supper; lastly, concerning a future state and the condition of men after this Life. To which may be added some other doctrines, which do not seem to have any connexion with the former, but yet are of dangerous consequence to the peace and welfare of all civil Societies: those I mean which he hath advanced about the power and authority of the Civil Magistrate, the Lawfulness of War and Oaths in a Christian Commonwealth, which have as mischievous an influence upon the order and peace of States and Kingdoms, as his other opinions have upon Religion.

So that *Socinus* having observed what was wanting in the former Hereticks to make their attempts entirely successful against the Christian Religion; being engaged in the same design, but in order to make it more effectual, he wisely resolved to correct what he thought was amiss in them: wherefore laying

ing aside what was more gross and absurd in the wilder and more extravagant opinions of the ancient Hereticks, and supplying the defects of the more subtle and refined who came afterwards; he and his followers have at length given us a body of their divinity, more compleat in its kind then ever the world was blessed with before their time. Not but that in spight of all their art and skill, such being the fate and folly of error, they cannot avoid, especially in the defence and maintenance of their opinions, falling into many and those very plain contradictions. Upon the whole matter I think it may be reasonably doubted whether *Socinus*, any more than that grand Impostor *Mahomet*, may be properly called a Heretick, as being the Founder of a new Religion, rather than the Author of a new name and sect among Christians. For as the Alcoran of the former, is, as we are told, a fardel of errors and absurdities arising from the impure mixture of Christianity, *Judaism*, and *Paganism*, together with some idle and extravagant notions of his own; so the doctrine of *Socinus*, seems to be a composition of the errors of *Arius*, *Photinus*, and *Pelagius*, &c. together with some additions of his own, not indeed so seemingly absurd, as those of *Mahomet*, but, I am afraid, no less dangerous to the Christian religion; of which he hath retained only the name together with the empty sound of the words; but with such false glosses, such forced and malicious interpretations, as have quite destroyed the true notion, as the whole design of the Gospel: in opposition to which he hath given us a kind of natural and new Religion, not such as the spirit of God hath revealed in his word, but such as his own carnal reason suggested to him, in opposition to that revelation. And that this may not be looked upon to be an uncharitable because a groundless charge; I shall lay before the reader a scheme of the religion revealed by God in Holy Scripture, and particularly that published by Christ and his Apostles in the writings of the New Testament, and which hath bin embraced by all sound Christians in all ages of the Church, from the first planting of one in the world, to this day, together with another of the new, or newly revived opinions of the *Socinians*: that by
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comparing of both, he may be able to make a judgment of what is here suggested, which upon examination I hope he will find to be agreeable to truth, and not contrary to charity. And first, as it is fit, we shall begin with the great object of our religion, Almighty God: in the knowledge and worship of whom, together with an obedience to his commands, consists the entire nature of religion. And here upon enquiry I believe we shall find, that what the Scriptures have revealed concerning the nature of God, is widely different from the account which *Socinus* and his disciples give us of him.

As to what concerns the nature of God, the Scriptures propose him to be considered two ways by us. 1. Absolutely in his glorious and essential attributes, or 2^{ly}, Relatively in the great and adorable mystery of the ever blessed Trinity.

First, if we consider God in his Attributes, we shall find that the first great, and, if I may so call it, fundamental attribute which the Scriptures reveal, and indeed natural reason dictates concerning him, is the unity of the Godhead, Deut. 6. 4. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.* Deut. 32. 39. *See now that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me.* 1 Cor. 8. 5. 6. *For tho there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, &c. But to us there is but one God the Father of whom are all things.* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *There is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, &c.*

Here undoubtedly it will be said that the *Socinians* are beyond all suspicion orthodox, all their studies and labors being employed in asserting and vindicating the unity of the Godhead in opposition to the doctrine of the Trinity, which according to their apprehensions must infer a plurality of Gods. But for all their boasts concerning this matter, and assuming to themselves upon that score the name of Unitarians, we must not be too hasty in acquitting them from the imputation of Polytheism; for tho they deny the eternal generation and divinity of Christ, and say that he had no existence before his being formed in the womb of the Virgin, and appearance in the world; and that the being which he then had was purely humane: yet after his resurrection from the grave, and his
ascension

ascension into heaven, they say that God the Father as the reward of his obedience and sufferings, exalted him to the honour and dignity of a God; not indeed to be the supreme and eternal God, but however *deus verus*, a true God, distinct and separate from his Father; and Socinus takes it ill of his adversaries, that they should charge him with denying Christ to be God¹, and complains against them that will not be brought to confess and worship him², for their Lord and God, who was once a weak and infirm man: and herein he saith the power and goodness of God was discovered, and his admirable wisdom displayed, in extolling and deifying this man, beyond what we can imagin³.

And to the objection that might be made against this opinion, as that which did unavoidably infer a plurality of Gods, *Wolzenus* will tell you, that if by two Gods you mean one of whom are all things and we in him, and one by whom are all things and we by him, we are so far saith he, from being ashamed of worshipping two such Gods, that we rather glory in it⁴. But if it shall be farther said, that to do them right, they acknowledge but one supreme God by nature, and that Christ is only a God by Appointment and Office, not, *natur* but *factus*, not born but made, and deified after his ascension, by a communication of the divine power, wisdom and goodness to him;

I Answer that this is so far from abating, that it rather encreases the difficulty, and makes the Socinian notion both absurd and impious, as may be shewn more at large hereafter, when we come to lay the charge of Idolatry at their door. Indeed one would think it should be a debasing of the name and honour that is due to God, to give either of them to any but him that is so from all eternity; the same *Wolzenus* will tell you, you may if you please, reproach them for so doing, but he values it not a rush, *nos non erubescimus*, we are not

¹ *Quasi nos Christum verum deum esse negamus, quod tamen à nobis non fit.* Socin. oper. Tom. 2. p. 645. ² *Ut pro Deo ac Domino suo venerentur,* p. 631. ³ *In eo homine supra quam dici potest extollendo & deificando,* Ibid. ⁴ *Ut potius id glorie nobis & laudi ducamus,* Wolzen. Prolegom. in Evangel. Johannis cap. 8. de vera divinitate Christi.

ashamed to own that we worship *Deum factum vel factitium*, a made God; not made indeed by a Goldsmith or Engraver, *ab aliquo sculptore vel aurifabro*, but they acknowledge with St. Peter Acts 2. 36. that God hath made Jesus who was crucified Lord and Christ, that is, saith he, *deum eximium fecerit*, hath made him a great and eminent God. *Ibid.*

If this be not enough, if you please to consult *Smalcus*, he will give you all the satisfaction that you can possibly desire further in this matter. For first, he will tell you, that whereas the Scriptures assure us that there is but one only true God, yet that must be taken *sano sensu*; not as if there were no other true God besides God the Father, but that there is none that is God; *eodem prorsus modo*, just in the same manner as he is ¹. For otherwise the thing is certain and past all doubt, that there are more true Gods then one; and let the Inspired writers be never so positive, yet he and his friends can and will with equal confidence advance this contrary position, that the true God is not one only God ². Nay it is not an indifferent matter, but a truth which they firmly believe and earnestly contend for ³. And therefore pronounce it without any hesitation, that there are more true Gods then one.

And indeed they have reason to contend earnestly for this opinion, if it be true what he saith in the same place, that to acknowledge and confess, and adore one only chief and supreme God, is purely *Judaical*, and a *renunciation of the Christian Religion* ⁴. Here he speaks as home to the point as you can possibly desire, and it is enough in all conscience. Thus whereas the Scriptures tell us there is but one God, the *Soci-nians* say there are two; one God by nature, another by grace,

¹ *Quod vero Deus ille, unus qui pater est, solus verus dicitur, id non ideo fieri dicimus quod nemo alius prater Patrem deus verus sit, sed quia nemo alius prater Patrem, isto prorsus modo deus verus sit, quo ille est.* Smal. Exam. Cent. Err. p. 4.
² *Certissimum est quod non unus tantum verus Deus sit.* Ibid. ³ *Contendimus & firmissime docemus esse plures Deos prater unum. Eosque veros.* Refut. Smigl. de Novis Monst. Nov. Ar. p. 14. ⁴ *Tantum unum summum deum agnoscere unum tantum naturam Deum Colere, unum tantum Independentem Deum conjiteri, esse Judaicum quidam, & abnegationem Christianae Religionis.* Ibid. p. 26.

one Supreme, another Inferior, one Greater, another Lesser, one Elder and eternal, the other a junior and modern God: and this by *Socinus* is made the great mystery of the Christian Religion, greater indeed if true, and more incomprehensible than any other, or than all the other stupendous and adorable mysteries of our Faith put together.

Now as the *Socinians* say there are two Gods; so if you believe *Curcellæus*, he will confidently tell you there are three, who tho he be no *Socinian*, yet he agrees perfectly with them in *almost all* their other Errors, except that which concerns the doctrine of the Trinity, where he hath a peculiar notion of his own, distinct as he tells you both from *Arius* and *Socinus*: for he makes the Son and Holy Ghost to have a divine nature communicated to them from all eternity, but yet such that is different in each of them, so that they are three distinct divine beings. And to the objection made by *Maresius*, that this notion must inevitably imply that there are three Gods; he Answers, that if by three Gods, be meant three specifically distinguished from each other, he disowns any such distinction between the persons of the Trinity; but if by three, be meant three persons agreeing in the same common nature, yet numerically distinguished in each of them, it is that which he owns and earnestly contends for; that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are as much three Gods as *Peter, Paul, and John*, agreeing in the same common nature are three distinct men. And if you believe him, he will tell you the Ancients were not afraid of the imputation of *Polytheism*, in this sense; and to think of the same individual nature being communicated to three persons, was a notion that never entered into the heads of any of the Fathers, in their disputes against the *Arians*, as being against both Reason and Religion. *Curcell. Dissert. prima de vocibus Trinit. &c. cap. 105. & deinceps.* And *Limburch*, who publishes and recommends him to the world, I suppose is of the same opinion.

The 2d Attribute which the Scriptures ascribe to God, is his immensity and omnipresence, assuring us that his nature is infinite, and consequently that it cannot be confined to any

A Preservative

place, or circumscribed within any limits. Tho he is peculiarly and eminently resident in Heaven, yet Solomon will tell us that *Heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him*, 1 King. 8. 27. and the Psalmist puts the question, *Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there also*. Ps. 139. 7, 8. So St. Stephen, Act. 7. 48. *the most High dwelleth not in Temples made with hands*, that is, is not confined within those limits, as many of the Heathens thought their Gods were, for, *as saith the Prophet, heaven is my Throne, and the earth is my footstool*. And indeed not only the infinite nature of God, but the belief of his providence necessarily supposes it. Upon which account we are said *in him to live, and move, and have our being*, Act. 17. 28. forasmuch as he is *above all, and through all, and in all*. Eph. 4. 6.

Now in opposition to this important Truth, which is not only revealed in Scripture, but dictated by the light of nature, and acknowledged upon that score to be such, by all sober Heathens, as well as by sound Christians; the Socinians will tell you, that God is not infinite in his Essence, or Nature, but that he is so confined to the Heavens, as not to be substantially present elsewhere, or not to fill any places out of those limits. And therefore when urged with those places of Scripture, which say that God *fills Heaven and Earth*, and that he is *every where present*, Jer. 23. 24. Ps. 139. They answer, that they must be Interpreted, only with respect to the virtue, power, and operations of God, which extend to the remotest places where he is not essentially present¹. As the Sun, which is the Instance some of them give us to illustrate this matter, is confined to the Heavens, and indeed takes up but a small room there in comparison, yet may be said to be, *ubique terrarum*, because he diffuses his Light, Heat, and other influences, to

¹ *Ea verba*, speaking of those words Jer. 23. 23. [Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off?] *Suadere videntur, ipsius Dei substantiam non ubique pariter presentem esse, & sic eam non esse immensam sive infinitam, quamvis ubique tamen sua virtute & providentia sit ipse Deus præsens*. Socin. de Deieffentia Cognitione p. 68. vid. Crellium, cap. 27. de Dei Immensitate & Omnipresentia.

the remotest parts of the Earth. But of this Attribute more hereafter.

The 3. Attribute ascribed to God in Scripture, is his omniscience, whereby he knows all things past, present, and to come, which knowledge of his extends it self not only to all things and persons, but likewise to all their actions and the effects of them, and together with them views the secret springs and principles of those actions, discerning the designs and contrivances of men, and all the thoughts and intents of the heart, *There being no creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do,* Heb. 4. 13.

What our Translation renders open, is more Emphatically expressed in the Greek, *τετραχλισμένα*, all things are, as it were, dissected and anatomized, the very inside of all things are laid open to his view. What is lodged in the darkest corners and deepest recesses of the Soul, cannot be hid from his sight, whose eyes are in every place, like a flame of fire, beholding the evil and the good. Nay this knowledge is of so vast an extent, as to comprehend within its mighty compass, not only things past and present, but likewise all things to come; for his duration being commensurate to all the parts of time, he doth not measure things as we do, by first and last, but all things present and to come, are open to him at one view, *with whom a thousand years are but as one day, and one day as a thousand years,* 2 Pet. 3. 8. Nay not only those things which are properly future with respect to any necessary causes of their production, but even those which are most contingent, as depending upon the spontaneous motion of mens free will; all such actions, together with the most casual events, as well as remote consequences of them, are the objects of Gods knowledge, who doth not only discern our Intentions and designs whilst they are *in fieri*, in the time of their hatching and framing in the Soul, but antecedently, long before the mind comes to any determination, he *understands our thoughts afar off*, Ps. 139. 2.

And of this besides the plain declarations of Scripture, the predictions that have bin made by God of the most contingent and fortuitous events are an Argument that one would think should

place this truth beyond all contradiction : It being that which God Almighty made choice of, to vindicate the honour of his divine nature and perfections, in opposition to the vain claim that was laid to them by the dull Idols of the heathens, and their more stupid worshippers, *Esay. 41. 22. Let them bring forth and shew us what shall happen, let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them, and declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter that we may know that you are God.*

It is true this knowledge of God as it extends to things to come, is too wonderful for us, we cannot attain to it : and therefore if we think to measure his knowledge by our own shallow conception of things, we engage in a task more absurd and ridiculous, than if we should attempt to take up the waters of the Ocean and inclose them in the hollow of our hand.

And of this absurdity are the *Socinians* guilty, who will by no means be brought to acknowledge this great truth ; for tho when you come to discourse with them upon this subject, they will tell you, they allow God to be omniscient, and that he knows all things ; yet you must not be too hasty in taking an advantage of that concession. You must give them leave to explain themselves ; God knows all things, That's true, but with this limitation, *quatenus sunt scibilia*, as far as they are capable of being known. But future contingencies must be excluded out of that number, having no being either in themselves, or in any certain or necessary causes of their production ; and therefore are no more the object of any, even divine knowledge, then darkness is the object of sight : your eyes may as soon be dazzled with one, as your understandings be affected or receive any Impression from the other.

For Gods knowledge, say they, is agreeable to the nature of the things known ; which may in some sense be true, but is a truth ill applied by them, when they tell us, that God knows things that are *certain*, as such that *shall* come to pass ; things that are *likely*, he considers as such that *may probably* come to pass ; things that are *barely possible*, as depending upon the arbitrary, and therefore uncertain determinations of mens

free will, he knows as *possible*, that is, they may or may not come to pass, but whether of these two shall happen, that is still a *secret* even to God himself; whose divine knowledge cannot arrive to the knowledge of such future contingencies, of which, according to the known *maxim*, there can be no certain or determinate truth or falsehood.

Perhaps you will say this *maxim* is true, with respect to second causes, and any *created* knowledge, but not with respect to the knowledge of God, to whom the most *casual* events are present, and therefore certain; for as much as he foresees which way men will freely determine their own choice, either in acting, or forbearing to act, in doing this, or doing the contrary. And without this prescience we cannot well imagine how God should be able to govern the world, and particularly Angels and Men, in whose actions and the event of them, his own glory is so eminently concerned.

The *Socinians* will tell you all this is a great mistake, and that such a notion of Gods knowledge is so far from being necessary to his providence, that it is derogatory to the freedom of mens will, and thereby leads to the dishonour of God, and the overthrow of all Religion, which *Crellius* endeavours at large to prove *Lib. de Natura Dei cap. 24. de Sapientia Dei.*

And after he hath taken some pains to shew that this omniscience is opposite to reason, he comes to shew its repugnance, as he thinks, to the plain declarations of Scripture, and what he and his Master say upon this head, and upon that which follows, it will be worth our while a little to enlarge upon, forasmuch as it will help to give us a true Idæa of *Socinianism*, which tends plainly to the dishonour of God, and in the conclusion to the overthrow of all natural as well as revealed Religion.

Now the places of Scripture which he quotes to this purpose, are those which speak of Gods waiting for the amendment and repentance of sinners, as he doth in that remarkable manner, *Esay 5. 4. What could I have done more for my vineyard, that I have not already done to it; and yet when I expected it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes? and v. 7. When he looked for judgment, behold oppression; for righteousness be-*
hold

hold a cry: How faith he could it be said either with propriety or truth, that if God had foreseen their *obstinacy*, he could have waited and hoped for their *amendment*. He farther refers us to two other places, to *Gen. 18. 21*. Concerning *Sodom*, and to that concerning *Abram Gen 22. 12*. this is certain faith he², That God here by a new and an extraordinary experiment, made a discovery of the faith and piety of *Abraham*, which he was not certain of before he made this tryal of it: And of the execrable Impieties of the *Sodomites*, which he would scarce believe they could be guilty of, till he came down from Heaven on purpose, and made as it were his own eyes the witnesses of the truth and certainty of those matters.

For a further confirmation of his opinion, he cites those places of Scripture where God is said to tempt *Abraham*, that is, to make a tryal of his obedience, *Gen. 22. 1.* and so those other *Deut. 8. 2.* *Judges 2. 21.* where God is said to have lead the Children of *Israel* in the wilderness forty years, to prove them, and to know what was in their hearts, and whether they would keep his commandments or no: and to have left of the *Canaanites* in the land, declaring his resolution not to drive them out thence, that he might prove *Israel*, whether they would keep the waies of the Lord as their Fathers did or no. From all which he concludes that he must be *pertinacissimus*, extremely obstinate that should oppose his opinion, which if you believe him³, is supported not only by the evidence and strength of reason, but by the Authority of Holy Scripture⁴.

What *Crellius* here faith against Gods prescience, he learned from his Master *Socin. Praelect. Theol. Cap. 8. p. 585*. Where the Master goes farther then the Scholar in aggravating the inconveniences that must attend the notion of prescience; for from hence faith he it must follow, that many things are ascribed to

1 Quo enim pacto potest huiusmodi dei id expectare, quod non eventurum planissime intelligit, imo jam reipsa videt, Ibid. 2 Deum novum quoddam & in signa experimentum, illic quidem impietatis Sodomitica videre voluisse, hic vero pietatis Abrahamica vidisse, quod antequam fieret, plane certum & exploratum non erat. 3 Non modo Evidentissima & plane cogente ratione nititur, sed & sacrarum literarum auctoritate stabilitur. 4 Crell. Ibid.

God in Scripture either *falsly*, or else must suppose him guilty of such *imprudence* ¹, which we cannot imagine any man could be lyable to, except he were *stark mad*. And then quotes the places before cited by *Crellius*, and to them adds *Numb. 14. 12. &c.* where God sware that the *Israelites* should not enter into the Land of *Canaan*, which yet he sware to their forefathers he would give them, and he did once really intend to put them in possession of it, but their murmurings and rebellions caused him to alter his resolution.

Now if God had *foreseen* the disobedience and impieties of the Children of *Israel* which moved him to change his purpose concerning them, in promising to bring them into the Land of *Canaan*, and confirming that promise with an oath; he must have acted, saith this *Bold man*, so, as we cannot suppose any man to have acted, that was not *quite out of his wits* ². But now against all this, the foretelling of future events, even such as are most contingent, as depending upon the entire freedom of mens wills; and the numerous as well as plain predictions of these matters which stand upon record in the book of God, one would think should be an *unanswerable objection*. And it seems it was so with *Episcopus*, who though he agrees too well with *Socinus* in many of his other *loose and dangerous* notions concerning the *nature and attributes* of God, yet here he leaves him, and declares himself of a contrary Opinion, being chiefly induced thereunto from this Argument of predictions.

But yet to mollify the matter; and to give as little offence as might be, to a party whose favour he courted, he tells them and us ³, that it was but a small matter about which they differ'd, which should break no squares between friends; for tho he affirmed, and they denyed, yet the ⁴ matter of the dispute was purely problematical, which had divided the opini-

¹ *Quæ ne in hominem cadere potest, nisi plane dementem.* Ibid. ² *Quis ex hominibus ita amens est, ut juret se aliquid facturum, quod se facturum minime esse jam probe noverit.* Ibid. ³ Lib. 4. Init. Th. cap. 18. ⁴ *Inter Eruditissimos Theologos Lix adhuc sub judice est.* Ibid.

ons of the most learned Divines, but never to that day had received any determination; ¹ That there was not one Christian in a thousand had any knowledge of it; in short, ² that it was so trifling and inconsiderable a matter, that neither Religion nor the worship of God was at all concern'd in it. But what *Episcopus* could not do, *Socinus* hath done, or at least hath attempted the doing of it; viz. the reconciling the truth of Gods predictions with the denyal of his prescience, and it is worth our while to hear what he saith upon this occasion.

1. Then, sometimes Gods predictions are no more then his warnings, *Potius monet quam prædicat*, Socin. præl. Th. cap. 10. God dealing with men, as men sometimes deal with children, telling them that they will do such and such ill actions, to deterr and shame them from so doing, *Solemus nos cum puerum ab aliquo errore committendo detertere volumus*, &c. Ibid.

2. God foretells some actions, and particularly some wicked actions, not as if he knew they would certainly be committed by evil men, *Quia ea certissime futura nosset; sed quia sic plane verisimile erat*, Ibid. but because it was very likely they should be so: that is, what we call a prediction, and what the Scriptures without any limitation deliver as such, *Socinus* accounts but a conjecture, that is a probable guess, of what may likely come to pass; But what may come to pass, may likewise not come to pass, and so for all their confidence, the inspired writers, and what we cannot think of without horror, the Holy Spirit that directed them might be mistaken. But forasmuch as these two former Answers may serve for some predictions, but cannot give a reasonable Enquirer just satisfaction as to others, which are so plain that the force of them cannot be thus eluded:

Therefore once for all to put an end to this objection, and you may well imagine he was hard pressed, before he would betake himself to this last, and in him a desperate shift; he is forced to take sanctuary at those very decrees of God, which at other times he opposes with all his might: like a Malefactor when close pursued, and finding no other way of

¹ Vix credo millesimum Christianum dari qui scientiam hujus rei habeat. ² Absque hujus scientia, religio cultusque divini numinis apud innumeros hominum Myriadas factus rectus constat. Idem ibid. escape

escape, he flies for *protection* to those very *Altars*, which at other times he hath so often profaned by his crimes.

For faith *Socinists*, the things which God foresees, are either good or evil; if good, he may absolutely decree what is so ¹, and make that necessary which otherwise would be but indifferent: nay he may impose a necessity upon the Wills of men, and make them to do and choose what is good ². Now this is downright *Calvinism*, and if you had a mind to believe it to be true, yet the *Socinians* themselves, and the Remonstrants their friends, will furnish you with such Objections against the belief of it, that to them at least they must be unanswerable. For it is a *known* and an *avowed Principle* among them both, First that where there is necessity, there is no religion; and consequently neither good nor evil ³. If our actions proceed not from freedom, they lose their nature, and may be any thing else, but cannot be virtue and vice, forasmuch as *necessity* takes away the *distinction* of actions good and bad ⁴.

2. That Freedom and Necessity are so opposite one to another, that Omnipotence it self cannot reconcile them, forasmuch as they are plain contradictions, and terms that destroy each other ⁵. That necessity robs you not only of your freedom but of your will it self, to which freedom is so necessary, that without it it is no will, it being an essential property of it, *proprium quarto modo*; and to say that the Will can subsist without its property, that is it's *essential liberty*, is *absurditate ipsa absurdius* ⁶. Now let us put both these things together: there is no Religion, consequently neither Good nor Evil, Virtue nor Vice, where there is necessity; and yet *nihil prohibet*,

1 Si testimonium loquitur de bonis operibus certo prævisis, sine dubio Deus ipse decrevit. Socin. Præl. Th. cap. 10. p. 549. 2 Crell. cap. 24. de sap. Dei. 3 Hoc est pessumdare religionem, quæ nulla proprie est ubi est necessitas. Smalc. contra Smigl. cap. 2. 4 Crell. cap. 24. de sapientia Dei p. 204. Ubi talis necessitas est, nec ullum verum peccatum est, nec meritum pænæ. Ubique necessitas dominatur ibi religioni non est locus. Examen. censuræ cap. 7. p. 82. So say the Remonstrants. 5 Quod necesse est, hominis libertatem à se penitus excludit. Socin. Præl. Th. cap. 8. Arbitrium libertatem in se continet quam si demas, arbitrium esse desuet. Crell. de volunt. Dei cap. 21. p. 139. Qui necessario vult & agit, is libero arbitrio præditus non est, Id. cap. 24. de sap. Dei. p. 206. 6 Exam. Censuræ Conf. Remonst. cap. 6. p. 76.

saith *Crell*. nothing, consequently neither religion, nor the nature of good and evil hinders, but that God may absolutely decree things good to be done ¹, and decree them so as to become necessary by virtue of that decree.

Again, the Will cannot be *necessitated* in any of its actions, forasmuch as this would destroy its freedom, which is a fundamental radical property of it, and cannot be separated from it without destroying the Will itself: And yet God can *impose a necessity* upon the wills of men of choosing this thing or another ²: and *Socinus* will tell you, that God usually leaves the wills of men to their freedom, *except* it be when his judgements require him to lay them under a necessity ³. Now how shall we reconcile these sayings, which to us poor Christians seem to be plain contradictions, and therefore impossible to be true. But *Socinus* is not only a great admirer of reason, but a great master of it too; and therefore by the help of a distinction, he doubts not but to bring himself fairly off; for in the forementioned place, having in order to give an account of some of the predictions of Scripture, bin forced to bring in the *Decrees* of God into his assistance, which could not, one would think, but *entrench upon the freedom* of mans will, by making all actions subject to these Decrees necessary; he gravely tells us, and we are behold- ing to him for the discovery; That notwithstanding his Decrees, God hath left man entirely to his liberty; for besides the direction and government of his *external actions which indeed God hath reserved* to himself, he hath left every thing else in the power of mans will ⁴. That is, when you say a man is a *free Agent*, you must distinguish between the *inward* and *outward Act*, between *choosing* and *doing*; in the former sense a man is entirely at liberty, for what can be freer than thought, who can lay a restraint upon mans will, or shackle his desires?

¹ Nihil prohibet quin Deus simpliciter bona fieri decernat. *Crell*. de sap. Dei p. 210.

² Potest necessitatem homini imponere hoc vel illud volendi. *Ibid*. ³ Deus voluntatem liberam esse finit, nisi quando ut ei necessitatem asserat, ejus judicia requirant. *Socin*. *Praelect. Th.* cap. 7. p. 544. Voluntas hominis ad extremum usque est plane libera, adeo ut præter ipsum factum externum, omnia in ejus sint potestate. *Ibid*.

The decrees of God, can put no force upon these, and here *Sapiens dominabitur astris*; they only govern mens outward actions, which may indeed become thereby necessary, *but that's no great matter*; *animus cujusque est quisque*, the mind is the nobler part, let a man but assert the honor and dignity of that; and he need not be much concerned what becomes of his outward actions. But against this it may be objected, that a great part of Religion consists in the practice of many External actions of *Piety* towards God, *Justice* and *Charity* towards men; and if these are not free, they are no longer Acts of Religion, any thing else but not Virtue and Vice as was said before. To this he will tell you, that God measures mens Obedience or Disobedience respectively, not by the *External Fact*, but by the *Internal Actions and consent of the Will* ¹.

Which tho in some sense, and with a just limitation it may be true; yet as it is here brought in by him, to serve his present purpose, is a very loose and a dangerous determination; in short this whole matter, as it is stated by *Socinus*, is lyable to very many and those unanswerable exceptions.

For 1st. whereas he saith the will even to the last is entirely at liberty; tho the external actions are subject to the decrees of God, and thereby become necessary; this is a plain contradiction to what both he and *Crellius* before told us, that God might *necessitatem afferre voluntati & necessitatem imponere hominibus hoc vel illud volendi*: force even the will, as well as make the outward actions necessary.

2^{ly}, He asserts a freedom in men to little or no purpose; for one would think if God gave man a principle of freedom, he did it chiefly for the government of his actions; and if these are not in his power he had even as good be without his liberty; and that his will and his actions should run the same fate, and be both equally subject to it. For my part I should think I had as good be shackled and manacled, as to have a

¹ Deus Obedientiam & Inobedientiam hominum, ex ipsa perfecta & consummata voluntate, non autem ex ipso Externofacto metitur. Ibid.

full power of moving, and yet not be able to stir either hand or foot.

3ly, If *Socinus* should be asked, how it can be imagined that the actions can be necessary, when the principle from whence they proceed is absolutely free, for it is of humane and voluntary actions that *Socinus* in that place is speaking, I believe it would puzzle him to give a satisfactory answer.

4thly, Tho *Socinus* takes care of the *freedom of mans will*, which he in this place is concerned to vindicate, yet as far as I can perceive he hath little care of *Religion*; for if, where there is necessity there can be no Religion, as the *Socin.* and *Remonstrants* said before, and that a great part of Religion consists in *external* as well as *internal* actions; I cannot see but that thereby Religion is left in great danger, if not entirely overthrown, and that *Vertue and Morality*, are for any assistance that *Socinus* in this place affords them, fairly left to shift for themselves.

Well, but however tho *Socinus* by making good actions subject to Gods decrees, and thereby necessary, may be guilty of *contradicting himself*; yet there is no great harm in all that, his opinion may be absurd, but he doth not design to encourage impiety thereby; for tho he make God the cause of good actions yet he doth not as his adversaries do, make him the *Author of Sin*. In reference to what is *Evil*, here man is left entirely to his own freedom, the guilt of which cannot be transferred upon the decrees of God, which are not in any wise concerned in them; but the shame and blame of all must be laid at mans own door, and imputed only to his own freedom. But soft and fair: there is no general rule but may have some exceptions; for there are plain predictions in Scripture, not only of *some good*, but of many *evil and wicked actions*, such for instance, as were the Treachery of *Judas*, and the denial of *Peter*, &c.

Now these according to the *Socinians*, God could not foresee except they were necessary, and they could not well be necessary without his decree, and therefore to reconcile the prediction and the event, God first resolves to have an ill thing done, and then wisely foretels the doing of it. Read what

what follows and then you will be further satisfied in this matter, and that *Socinus* and his followers are not wronged in having this laid to their charge.

For first, saith *Crellius*, if God finds men fit and disposed for any mischief, *Eorum malitia uti potest ad consilia sua exequenda* ¹, he may make use of their wickedness to compass his own designs. Nay not only so, he may likewise decree something to be done by them, *Quod sine peccato ab iis fieri nequit*, Ibid. which cannot be done without sin. What *Crellius* saith in general, *Socinus* gives us an example of in the Egyptians, whose sin in oppressing the Children of Israel, God long before foresaw and foretold, *Gen. 15.* as having decreed it to be done. But to excuse this matter he saith, God did not put that wicked disposition into the minds of the Egyptians, but found it there, *Malam eam mentem in ipsis invenerat, qua ad judicium suum exequendum, quodammodo abusus est.* *Prælect. Th. cap. 10. p. 547.* and what he found there, he made use of for the execution of his judgements.

This is something, but it is not full enough, this is but beating about the bush, therefore he will keep you no longer in suspense. Not only an action that could not be done without sin, but the sin it self may be decreed and effected by God, *Si quid ab hominibus contra Dei legem committitur id non quidem decernente ac autore Deo fieri asseveramus, nisi raro ac quibusdam de causis*, *Socin. Præl. Th. p. 544.* that is, if God be the Author of sin it is but rarely, and that for very weighty reasons. Here again *Socinus* to our great amazement, is a downright predestinarian, and if we may judge of the opinions of *Calvin* even by the representation of his adversaries, he is *Calvino ipso Calvinior*. What *Socinus* here affirms, that God sometimes is the Author of mens sins, is confirmed by *Smalcus*, but with this difference, that whereas by *Socinus* God is made the immediate Author of sin, *Smalcus* will bring in the Devil to bear part of the blame, *deum quandoque per diabolum homines compellere ad scelera perpetranda* ². God indeed, saith he, com-

¹ *Crell. cap. 24. De Sapientia Dei p. 210.* ² *Smal. Contra Frantz. p. 416.*

pells men to do evil, but he makes use of the ministry of the Devil, who is the instrument in the Compulsion.

What they say thus in general, they do further illustrate, if you think what hath bin said may not be so clear, but that it may want a Comment, by particular instances, and specially that of *Peter's* denial of his Master, which was a *contingent Event*, one would think, as depending upon the freedom of his will, and yet this was foretold by Christ. But how could this be? why *Socinus* will tell you this denial of *Peter*, was not a matter so contingent as you may imagine; for God for the punishment of his confidence, decreed to withdraw his Grace from him, upon which subtraction of his Grace, that denial could not but follow¹. Nay he goes farther; not only withdrawing his Grace from *Peter* in the *Hour of Temptation*, but taking *effectual course* that he should be tempted. For, saith he, *Peter* being disposed to commit this sin, and wanting only an *Opportunity* of putting it into practice, to make good the truth of his prediction, God took care to offer him *that occasion*. And this he thinks may safely be said, without any absurdity². Here he speaks home and full to the point.

Indeed at another time he himself can scarce *digest*, what he here would have his Readers *swallow without straining*; for, saith he, to say that God *foresees evil, because he decrees it, cannot be affirmed without impiety*³. How shall we reconcile this with all we before quoted out of him? I confess I was in some pain for him, to know how he would come off, but he soon relieved me: by the help of a distinction he can perform wonders, among which one of the greatest is to *reconcile contradictions*. For saith he, *Si certa mali operis pradiſtio erit, ipsum quidem opus à deo decretum fuerit, non autem cordis malitia*, p. 549.

¹ Negatio ista necessario consecutura erat, Socin. ibid. p. 548. ² Non alia re opus erat, nisi ut occasio Christum negandi Petro daretur, id quod deum ipsum curasse, i. e. Effecisse, nihil absurdi continet. Vid. Smal. Contra Frantz. p. 431. Ubi asserit voluntatem Petri quodammodo esse coactum & ad breve temporis spacium libertate sua privatam, idque Deum interdum & facere posse & solere. ³ Peccata ita à deo nota fuisse affirmare, quia futura omnino ita decrevisset, impium prorsus videri debet. Ibid. p. 547.

That is, you must distinguish between the *Act* and the *Obliquity* of it, and then you may reconcile the honour of *Gods justice* and the *truth* of his *predictions*: a very nice and Methaphysical distinction, and which I should almost have despaired to have found any where, but in the writings of a *Schoolman* or a *Calvinist*.

Upon the whole, I think, we have reason to admire the *Judgment* of God, upon these men; in giving them up, as a *just punishment* of their contempt of his *Revelations*, to the *conduct* of their own *carnal* and *corrupt Reason*, which when it is not assisted by a *Divine Revelation*, is but a blind guide in matters of Religion; and therefore it is no wonder if we find them roving and wandering in a labyrinth and maze of Errors, like men bewildred, going backward and forward, saying and unsaying, and at length growing giddy, and falling back into those very opinions which they have made so much haste to fly from, and upon the account of which, they and the Remonstrants have raised so many, and such *tragical* exclamations against their adversaries.

4^{ly}. The next *Attribute* that the Scriptures ascribe to God, is his *Immutability*, whereby he is incapable of *Alteration*, and therefore not *liable to change* 1 Sam. 15. 29. *The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent.* This would argue God to be like our selves, of like weakness, and like passions with men.

For whatever *Alterations* may happen in the world, yet he remains *unalterable*, with whom is no *variableness*, neither *shadow of turning*. James 1. 17. Indeed men upon many accounts, and for many very warrantable reasons, may be obliged to shift and change their *Counsels* and *Resolutions*: who for want of *wisdom* and *foresight* in laying their projects, or for want of *strength* to execute them, and by a great many other *unexpected accidents*, which the greatest prudence could not foresee, nor consequently avoid, oftentimes meet with many and fatal disappointments.

But when *Infinite Wisdom* is joyned with *Infinite Power*, nothing can hinder such an *Agent* from bringing his purposes to the desired Event. *My counsel, saith the Lord, that shall stand*

stand, and I will do all my pleasure, *Esay. 46. 10.* Who can withstand the power of God? who can baffle his Contrivances, or resist his will? For the Counsels and Decrees of God are as *Immutable* as his Nature; for be they Absolute, or be they Conditional, as long as he foresees the performance of the Condition, it makes no difference in this case: many devices may be in mans heart, *but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand, Prov. 19. 21.* however men may alter, and the dealings and dispensations of Gods providence in several acts of mercy and justice upon that score, may be different towards them; yet this is without alteration or change in his purposes towards them, *who remains still the same, yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

The Socinians utter many bold and dangerous expressions in opposition to this plain truth, which is the unavoydable consequence of their denial of Gods Omniscience. Forasmuch as there are many events which depend upon the actions of men, which arising from the freedom of their Will, are therefore purely contingent, and consequently out of the reach of Gods knowledge; this must according to them unavoidably cause God to alter his counsels, to take new measures, to change his affections towards men, and alter his purposes concerning them: that is, he who is a *Reprobate* to day, may be an *Elect* person to morrow, and he who at present is elect, may afterwards be reprobated, and those may finally perish, *quos Deus saluti destinavit*, whom God once designed for eternal happiness. *Socin. de Off. hominis Christiani, cap. 11.* Now this one would think should be an Argument of inconstancy, and consequently not fit to be ascribed to God.

Crellius will tell you, there is no such matter; this is only an instance of his freedom; it shews you only that there is a variety in the acts of Gods will, *but no inconstancy.* For a man is then said to be constant to his purpose, who persists in it till some good reason obliges him to alter it, and therefore

¹ Constantis: est persistere in animi proposito, nisi quid intervenerit, cuius rationem immerito haberi possit, & quod in aliam sententiam voluntatemque flectere queat. Crell. cap. 25. de Sanct. Dei, p. 265.

what you would call wavering, he will say is the result of wisdom; God accommodates his decrees to the nature of things, and the actions of men; so that in short, *God is subject to change*, but not without good reason; he may alter his purposes as wise men usually do, according to the *different circumstances* of things, and as the exigence of his affairs shall require.

But with the leave of this bold man, another would be apt to think, that tho' men may without the imputation of levity alter their counsels, yet this arises from the *imperfection of their natures*, and particularly of their *knowledge of future events*, which tho' it be no *fault*, yet it must be acknowledged a *weakness*, tho' such an one as they are no more accountable for, than they are, because they cannot restore sight to a man born blind, or raise the dead. But it cannot be ascribed to God without a *derogation* to his infinite knowledge, and *unerring judgement*, and is therefore an argument of weakness, notwithstanding all that *Crellius* urges very weakly to the contrary, *Ibid.*

Therefore that we may return where we first began, to the Decrees of God concerning the future, and final state of men; this is certain, that they with relation to their several and respective objects, are fixed and *unmoveable*; for be they *antecedent* or *subsequent* to his foresight of mens *faith or infidelity*, it matters not in this case: the Scriptures however assure us, and right reason would confirm the same, that they are *immutable*, more stable then the *Foundations of the Earth*, or the *Poles of the World*, which may and shall be shaken, and stagger out of their places like drunken men, *but the Counsel of the Lord that shall stand.*

For let holyness and perseverance be the cause or the effect of Gods election, yet all sober persons agree in this, that whoever lives an holy life, and perseveres in it, *is undoubtedly chosen* by God to eternal life, and whosoever lives and dies in his *sins and impenitence*, is certainly designed and shall be

¹ *Quæ rebus mutatis ita consilia mutat, ut ea illarum rationi attemperet*, Cap. 32. de Decretis Dei. p. 350.

doomed to everlasting punishment: *here the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are his, and them that are not so.* But Socinus, who denies the certainty of Gods knowledge of many future events, *viz.* those which are contingent, such as are the actions of men, as depending upon the *uncertain because free* motions of their will; must in pursuance of this principle, deny the certainty of Gods Election; because he cannot foresee who will obey his commands and continue to do so, against all the temptations which they will meet with in the world to the contrary: and consequently he must say, what another would account Impiety to think, that God Almighty for *want of knowing* the determination of mens choice, must likewise *be ignorant* of the final event of their actions: and therefore he who at present is the object of his Love, and designed by him for the joyes of Heaven, may in the conclusion for ought he knows, merit his displeasure, and be tumbled down to hell.

Now that men may make such *uncertain conjectures* concerning their final state, and thereupon meet with a *fatal and terrible disappointment*, may be a certain tho a sad truth, and therefore no great wonder: But to think that it should thus happen to the *Allwise Creator of men*, is to have too mean and dishonourable conceptions of him; and such the Socinians have, doubting not to aver, that God finds reason to alter not only his dispensations towards men according to their behaviour, but his own intentions of kindness and displeasure, choosing what at first he refused, and refusing afterwards what once he thought worthy of his Approbation and choice, *Socin. præl. Th. cap. 7.*

A fifth attribute in God, and which indeed cannot be separated from him, without overthrowing all Religion, is his Justice: and that not only as it signifies *his holiness and righteousness*, but as it betokens his *anger, indignation, his severity and displeasure* against Sin and Sinners. And this the Scripture speaks very often of, *Psal. 5.* the Psalmist describes God as one not only *that hath no pleasure in wickedness*, ver. 4. which arises from the holiness and righteousness of his nature, but as one
likewise

likewise that *hates all the workers of iniquity*, ver. 5. and particularly, who abhors the deceitful, and will destroy the Lying man. *The wicked and him that loveth violence his Soul abhors*, Psal. 11. 5. Hence he styles himself a jealous God, jealous of his authority and honour, and will revenge the contempt of it: *he is slow to anger*, but yet will not acquit the wicked, forasmuch as he is jealous, and furious, *who will take vengeance on his adversaries, and reserves wrath for his enemies*, Nahum. 2, 3. and when God proclaims his name, the name by which he desires to be known, it is the *God merciful and gracious*, &c. *but yet one that will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. 34. 6. Numb. 14. 18. *he is Deus ultionum, the God to whom vengeance belongeth*, Pf. 94. 1. *the God of recompences*, Jer. 51. 56. and in short, *a consuming fire*, Heb. 12. 29.

All which expressions seem plainly to denote, that Justice in God is a necessary and an essential attribute, and which you can no more separate from him than you can his nature: I mean that Justice which betokens his *severity and indignation* against sinners, and moves and enclines him to punish them, tho the punishment it self may in some sense be said to be *arbitrary*, and subject to the freedom of Gods will; as are also the *Emanations of his goodness*, and the *effects* of his power: but yet all this doth not hinder but that power and goodness may be essential Attributes of God, and are acknowledged so to be by the *Socinians* themselves: and the like we affirm of *Justice*, to the terrible effects of which, the sins of men render them necessarily obnoxious: all guilt which is the inevitable consequence of sin being in its own nature an obligation to punishment.

But *Socinus* will furnish you with new notions concerning God in this matter, and quite different from what either Jews or Christians have conceived of him. For he will tell you, that Justice and Mercy in God, not only as to *their external effects* as they are discovered in rewards and punishments, but likewise in themselves, are not attributes essentially belonging to God, but are things purely arbitrary and indifferent: and particularly that justice, as it bespeaks an hatred of sin and indignation

dignation against the workers of iniquity, is not a *permanent property*, or, as he loves to speak, a *quality* residing in God, which belongs to him *per se*, but *ex accidente*, that is, it is a matter purely contingent, and the effect only of his *free and mutable will*.

Now this as it is laid down by the *Socinians* I take to be not only a false but a dangerous position; forasmuch as it furnishes us with such a notion of God as is *dishonorable to him*, and will naturally lead us to a contempt of him. But before I come to prove this, (forasmuch as I take it to be a matter of great importance in it self, and especially is so in our disputes with the *Socinians*, who have introduced this notion of God without Justice, in order to destroy the *true reason* of Christs death and sufferings, which was to give *satisfaction to the Justice* of God for the sins of mankind,) I must crave leave to lay down certain positions, which tho I might take for granted, and call *postulata*, as being commonly known and received Truths: yet I shall as I go along endeavour to prove them so.

The first thing therefore which I shall lay down, is, that if there be a *Providence*, it must be chiefly and principally employed in the care and government of human affairs: for there can be no imaginable reason assigned, nay it would be contrary to all reason to suppose, that God should take care of *Beasts and Inanimate Creatures*, and neglect one of the noblest parts of the Creation, I mean man, for whose sake chiefly, next to his own Glory, he created the visible world, and to whom as to his *Viceregent* he hath given the Dominion over the works of his hand, having put all things under his feet.

1 *Iustitia ea, quæ severitas vel vindicta, vel ira, vel indignatio, vel simili alio nomine nuncupatur, non est qualitas seu realis proprietas, nec vere residet in Deo, sed tantummodo effectus est voluntatis ejus.* Socin. di p. de Christo Servatore, p. 123. *Nullam ejusmodi in Deo proprietatem, b. e. qualitatem in ipso perpetuo residentem, esse censemus, quæ Deum ad peccata puniendâ simpliciter moveat. Sed id quod in ipso existens eum ad peccata puniendâ simpliciter movet, iram & severitatem, misericordiæ oppositam, esse statuimus; quæ non proprietas est in Deo perpetuo residens, sed velut affectus quidam ipsius, & libera voluntatis effectus.* Crell. Resp. ad Grot. de Satisf. Christi. p. 1.

2dly, There can be no providence nor care of human affairs without giving men *Laws* for the government of their actions: for as his providence towards other creatures is seen, in giving them certain laws of motion and rest suitable to their respective natures, and in guiding and governing them so, as may most tend to his own glory, and the welfare and beauty of the universe: so his *government and care of men* consists in giving them certain Laws as Rules of their actions and manners; it being much more requisite upon many accounts that they should act by a certain direction; forasmuch as the confusion and mischief that must be the consequence of their disorderly living must be far greater, and more repugnant to the nature and righteousness of God, than if other creatures should swerve from the Laws of their creation; which yet they inviolably observe, except when God thinks fit to *interpose*, for the ends of his own Glory, and the good of men.

3dly, That Laws are so a *Rule of Moral actions*, as to put us under an *obligation* of yielding obedience to them, and in this they differ from *good counsel and advice*, which tho it tend to our advantage, and the promoting of our truest and best interest, yet it puts us under no necessary obligation of complying with it, every man being left to his liberty to take or refuse it at his pleasure.

4thly, That the violation of a Law naturally and necessarily upon that very score makes a man *liable to punishment*: which is but the same thing tho in other words with the foregoing proposition: for therefore are we *obliged* to yield obedience to Laws, because if we refuse to do so, we are thereby *obnoxious to punishment*. This is that which in the civil Law is called, *Jus seu obligatio delicti, quo quis ob maleficium ad penam tenetur*. The prescribing of a Law is the act of

1 *Lex est regula actuum moralium, obligans ad id quod rectum est*, Gr. de Jur. B. & P. Lib. 1. Cap. 1. Sect. 9. 2 *Obligationem requirimus, nam consilia & si qua alia sunt præscripta honesta quidem sed non obligantia, Legis aut Juris nomine non veniunt*, Ibid. *Ubi consilium datur, offerentis arbitrium est; ubi præceptum, necessitas servitutis*, Hieron. Lib. 2. contra Jovin. *Decretum necessitatem facit, exhortatio liberam voluntatem excitat*. Gratian. Dist. 4. ad finem.

a Superior, whereby he obliges his Subject to regulate his actions according to that prescription; which if he refuses to do he may be called to an account as one that deserves to be punished for his disobedience ¹. This is one of the prime dictates of nature ², as well as the Language of Scripture, *that he who doth wrong*, not only as that signifies injury, but any evil ingeneral, *should receive for that evil that he hath done*, Col. 3. 25.

Lastly, That there is a necessary relation between punishment and justice, whose office among other things is to distribute rewards and punishments. I do not say that Justice is alwaies *obliged to exact the punishment*, which the Delinquent is alwaies and necessarily *obliged to suffer*, I mean is necessarily obnoxious to; but wherever there is punishment if just, it must flow from that *Habit or Attribute* which we call *Justice*; and that not only as it bespeaks *Righteousness and Equity*; but likewise as it signifies that *severity and indignation* which every Lawgiver is supposed to conceive against him that transgresseth his Laws, who thereby violates his Authority and offends against the publick good.

It hath bin doubted indeed whether in human punishments, the Civil Magistrate may aime at the vindicating of his own Authority, consider'd abstractedly from the publick good. And here that famous passage of *Seneca* ³, is often cited upon this occasion, and which he translated out of *Plato de Leg. no wise man punishes a fault because it hath bin committed*, but lest the like should be committed again: for what is past cannot be recalled, but wise and good men in punishment aime at preventing mischief for the future.

But tho this may be true with respect to men, yet it is not so with regard to Almighty God, to whom, as *Grotius* in

¹ *Præceptum ibi est, ubi est pœna peccati*, Ambr. Lib. de Viduis. *Præcepto quisquis non obtemperat, reus est & debitor pœnæ*, August. Lib. de Sancta Virgin. ² *Inter ea quæ natura ipsa dicitur licita esse, est & hoc, ut qui male fecit malum ferat: quod Antiquissimum & Rhadamantheim Jus vocant Philosophi* Grot de Jure B. & P. Lib. 2. Cap. 20. Sect. 1. ³ *Nemo prudens punit quia peccatum est, sed ne peccetur: revocari enim præterita non possunt, futura prohibentur*, Lib. 1. de Clem. Cap. 6.

the formentioned Book and Chapter Sect. 4. hath very truly and judiciously observed, those sayings of *Plato* and *Seneca* would be very ill applyed; forasmuch as God in punishing the sins of men, may very righteously, and oftentimes doth, aime at nothing but the asserting of his own honour, and vindicating the authority of his Laws, and in short, the *revenging the contempt and violation of them*: as is evident in certain invisible *punishments* inflicted upon some sinners in this life, such as are *obduration* and giving them up to a *Reprobate sense*; and will be much more evident in those *everlasting punishments* (for so we will make bold to call them whatever the *Socinians* may say to the contrary) in the life to come, where God can aime at nothing but the *satisfaction of his Justice*, and thereby the manifestation of his own Glory ¹.

But whatever the reasons may be of inflicting punishment either by God or man, yet Justice is the hand that inflicts it: which is called *distributive* or *vindictive*, and is therefore defined by an ² Ancient writer from one of its noblest offices to be *τιμωρῶν ἀπαρτίστis*, an exacting of punishment: And by *Plutarch* to the same purpose, to be *τῶν ἀσολιπομένων τῇ θεῷ νόμῳ τιμωρῶν*, *ultrix in eos qui adversus legem divinam delinquant*.

Now these things being thus premised, I proceed to make good my charge against the *Socin.* in calling that not only a *false but a dangerous Opinion* of theirs, which makes Justice to be no *necessary or essential Attribute* in God, but a matter purely *Arbitrary and Contingent*, as being the effect only of his free will.

1. Then this Opinion I say is false and impious, because it furnishes us with such an Idea of God as is *dishonourable* to him and will naturally lead us to a contempt of him; because it teaches us so to conceive of God, as of one that is not

¹ Certe pœnas quorundam valde perditorum à Deo non ob aliud (scil. extra se) exigi, sacra verba testantur, cum dicunt eum voluptatem capere ex ipsorum malo, subannuari atque irrideri impios à Deo. Tum vero & extremum judicium post quod nulla expectatur emendatio, immo & in hac vita pœne quædam inconspiciunt, ut Obduracy, verum esse quod contra Platonem dicimus evincunt. Ibid. ² Apud Grot. Ibid.

necessarily concerned in the Actions of men and the affairs of the World: that is, it gives us a notion of a God *without a providence*; for if there be a providence, it must chiefly and principally be employed (as was said in our first Prop.) in the *care and government of Human Affairs*; there can be no government without Laws, no laws without the Sanctions of Punishment, either expressed or necessarily implied in all such Laws; no punishment without Justice to inflict it; and consequently (that we may bring both ends of our *Sorites* together) where there is no Justice, there is no Providence; and where the one is not necessary, the other is not so too. Therefore tho the *Socinians* do acknowledge Gods providence and that he doth actually govern the World, yet this doth not take off the charge of falshood and impiety from this position of theirs; because thereby they make his providence to be a contingent and perfectly an Arbitrary matter; you may notwithstanding all this have a true notion of God and do him no wrong, if you conceive of him as of one that may be unconcerned in the actions of men, who after he hath sent them into the world, may suffer them to live as they please, every man doing that which is right in his own eies: which yet is great Impiety so much as to imagine; forasmuch as it is repugnant to the infinite perfections of Almighty God, helps to debase him in our thoughts, to weaken that reverence and esteem which arises in our minds when we conceive of him; and thereby leads us naturally and inevitably from a disesteem to a denial of him.

So that what at first I called a *dangerous* I am now afraid in the conclusion will prove to be an *Atheistical assertion*: upon which account *Epicurus* among the Ancients was generally accounted an Atheist; ¹ *Posidonius* the Stoick thought him so, and that it was only the Envy and Infamy which attended such persons, which obliged him not to profess himself one: But what *in words* he affirmed, he did in *deed* effectually overthrow: For by denying Gods providence, ² *Re sustulit, Oratione reliquit deos.*

1 Cicer. de Natura Deo. Lib. 1. Cap. 123. 2 Ibid.

In which charge against *Epicurus*, *Cotta the Academick* hath had the consent of all wise men among the *Heathens*, as well as the suffrage of *Christians*: whose way of arguing would be of no force, had they not bin of Opinion, that if there be a God who made the World, there must necessarily be a Providence; and if a Providence, I am sure there must be that Attribute in God which we call Justice, without which that other can never be exercised. But you will say that God may give men Laws for the government of their Actions, and that will be a sufficient vindication of his providence, tho he assigns no punishment to the breach of them. That is, tho we cannot conceive a God without a providence, yet we may conceive a providence without Justice. Indeed *Socinus* hath told us so, for speaking of the command of God to *Adam* in Paradise, requiring him not to eat of the forbidden fruit, and the threatning annexed, *In the day thou eatest thou shalt dy the death*, Gen. 3. which threatning *Covet* his adversary told him, did flow from that Justice in God which we have hitherto bin speaking of; he Answers, that this Justice was not any thing in God inhering in him, and therefore nothing could flow from it, as being only an accidental effect of his free will: ¹ *Cum à me ostensum fuerat, ejusmodi justitiam in Deo non verè residere, nec propriè Dei qualitatem dici posse, sed tantummodo effectum voluntatis ejus; nihil ex ea fluere potuit*: as much as if he had said, non entis nulla sunt operationes, what is not, can have no influence to produce any thing. And for a confirmation of this he adds, ² that God might have given *Adam* (and what God might have done to *Adam*, he might undoubtedly have done to all the Sons and posterity of *Adam*) this law, and not have annexed Death as the punishment of the breach of it, nay if he had so pleased he might have assigned no punishment at all.

But this is delivered by *Socinus* with the same Confidence as

¹ Socin Disp. de Christo Serv. pars prima p. 123. ² Quod verum esse deprehenderetur, si consideremus potuisse Deum præceptum illud homini tradere, neque tamen pœnam Mortis, si illud non servasset addere: Immo ne pœnam quidem ullam. Ibid.

are many of his other absurd *Errors*, in which he stands single by himself, against the constant and uniform suffrage of Divines Ancient and Modern, Fathers and Schoolmen, Philosophers and Lawyers, and those both Canonists and Civilians: among whom it passes for an uncontrolled maxim, That, that is very vainly and *impertinently commanded* which may be *securely neglected*. *Frustra est aliquid præcipere, quod impunè potest negligi*: and this bold position he lays down, and gives us not the least reason for it, but his own affirmation. But tho he gives us no reason for his assertion, I am sure there is very great as well as very apparent reason against it; forasmuch as such Laws as these will neither secure the honour of God, nor serve the ends of his providence; being but in the nature of good advice, which, as we said before, every man is at liberty to take, or refuse at his pleasure.

So that while he makes the Law precarious, at the same time and for the same reason he makes the Obedience of men so too: in which case God must be beholding not to his own *Authority*, but to the *good nature* of his Creatures, that they yield any obedience to his commands. Perhaps you will say there may be other *obligations*, besides those of punishment which men may be under to practise their duty: such as are those of *Honour and Gratitude*, and the strong tye of Reason, which will bind a man to comply with his Duty, if there were no other motive to it, but this, that to do otherwise will be to act unsuitably to the dignity of his nature.

All this may be fine in speculation, but will signifie little when reduced to practice: the generality of men being governed by *sense*, the motions of which are too *headstrong* and *furious* to be curbed by the bare commands of reason, when they are not enforced with the *fear of punishment*: the voice of which will be as feeble as that of old *Eli* to his rebellious Sons, far too weak to master their violence: and therefore that *Frantick Woman* that some have talked of, who brought fire in one hand to burn up Paradise, and water in the other to quench the flames of Hell, if she had succeeded in her design, instead of promoting would have extinguished

tinguished all virtue, and soon have rooted it out of the world.

In short, to sum up what hath been said upon this subject: if there be no *Justice naturally in God*, there might have bin no *Providence*, and if no providence, then men might have bin left to the conduct of their own *giddy and unruly passions*, which would soon break through the restraints of reason; and when men were thus left to the government of *Lust and Sense*, the unavoidable consequence of this must have bin, that the world would have bin filled with *Blood and Murders*, with *Impurity and Uncleaness*, with *Theft and Rapine*, with *Injustice and Oppression*, and the gentle race of men would soon have become worse then the worst of wild Beasts, preying upon and devouring one another. And to suppose that God could be *unconcerned* at all this, as if there be no *Justice* in him which enclines him to punish such wickedness, he might be, is to have such a notion of God as it is reported *Lewis* the 11th of *France* had of his Leaden God which he carried about him, and when he had caused any man to be Murder'd, or done the like mischief, he would take it into his hands, and kiss it, and beg pardon, and then all was well again, and he himself became immediately safe if not innocent. In short at this rate, we should not dishonour God if we so conceived of him, as of one who did not *necessarily* act according to the *eternal and unalterable Rules of Wisdom, Goodness, and Righteousness*, that he might be a God not of Order but Confusion, which is not only an *Impious*, but a *Blasphemous* assertion.

2dly, My second reason why I account this Position of *Socinus* about Gods justice to be false and dangerous, is because it takes away the distinction between *Laws Positive and Natural*; which distinction hath hitherto bin looked upon, not only to be *true* but *sacred*; forasmuch as the contrary would open a Gap to, all manner of impiety and wickedness. Now *positive* Laws are accounted such as owe their original only to Gods free will and pleasure; and therefore as they cannot be known, so they cannot oblige any but those to whom he hath made such a declaration, and discovery of his plea-

are many of his other absurd *Errors*, in which he stands single by himself, against the constant and uniform suffrage of Divines Ancient and Modern, Fathers and Schoolmen, Philosophers and Lawyers, and those both Canonists and Civilians: among whom it passes for an uncontrolled maxim, That, that is very vainly and *impertinently commanded* which may be *securely neglected*. *Frustra est aliquid precipere, quod impunè potest negligi*: and this bold position he lays down; and gives us not the least reason for it, but his own affirmation. But tho he gives us no reason for his assertion, I am sure there is very great as well as very apparent reason against it; forasmuch as such Laws as these will neither secure the honour of God, nor serve the ends of his providence; being but in the nature of good advice, which, as we said before, every man is at liberty to take, or refuse at his pleasure.

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sure. ¹ *Natural Laws* are those which are discovered by the light of nature, as being the necessary result of our Constitution, and that relation which we bear to God as rational Creatures: many of which tho revealed in Scripture, yet in themselves are obligatory, antecedent to any such revelation.

Now these Laws do necessarily suppose Justice in God, without which they would be insignificant: for tho natural Laws owe their Original to the holyness of God, as being but a transcript of those essential Rules of righteousness which make up his nature; yet all their *force and obligation*, (without which they are not properly Laws) results from his *Justice*; that is, from the fear of punishment, which the *Law threatens*, and *Justice inflicts*, without which they would be perfectly insignificant. From which by a just and necessary consequence it unavoidably follows, that if their be natural Laws, there must be Justice naturally in God: so on the other hand, if there be no Justice, there can be no Laws of nature, forasmuch as without the former they can have neither *Force nor Obligation*, nor consequently have the *formal reason of Laws*.

3dly And Lastly, This Opinion of *Socin.* is both false and Impious, because it tends to overthrow all natural Religion, by supplanting that which is the chief if not the only support of it in the world, and that is the fear of God. For take away his Justice as this *Socinian* hypothesis doth, and then you have left nothing in him which a man governed by the light of nature need to fear: not his unity, nor his eternity, nor immensity, not his holyness, nor his goodness, to be sure; nor lastly his power which in conjunction with the former, as it necessarily is in God, is as harmless and innocent as either

¹ *Jus naturale est dictatum recte rationis, indicans alicui actui, ex ejus convenientia aut disconvenientia cum ipsa natura rationali, inesse moralem turpitudinem aut necessitatem moralem, ac consequenter à Natura Autore talem actum aut vetari aut præcipi. Actus de quibus tale extat dictatum, debiti sunt aut illiciti per se, atque ideo à Deo necessario præcepti aut vetiti intelliguntur, quâ notâ distat hoc jus non tantum ab humano jure, sed & à Divino voluntario, quod non ea præcipit, aut vetat, quæ per se ac suapte naturâ aut debita sunt, aut illicita; sed vetando, illicita, præcipiendo, debita facit.* Grot. de Ju. B. & P. Lib. 1. Cap. 1. Sect. 10.

of the former Attributes, when it is not moved nor excited by a just displeasure and indignation.

Imagine therefore a *Socinian* were to discourse a *Pagan*, I would fain know how upon this principle he could convince him that it were his Duty to worship God, and to live a virtuous life: he might tell him indeed, and tell him with great truth, that the *Divine nature and perfections* are in themselves a just ground of *Esteem and Adoration*: That virtue hath many and those powerful though invisible charms, as being both agreeable to our Reason, and at the same time serving to promote our welfare and happiness in this world; yet all this would lay him under no *obligation* to do that, which otherwise would be *highly reasonable* and fitting to be done: suppose it be *honest*, suppose it *rational*, suppose it his *Interest*, yet he is left to his *liberty*, and may, and no doubt will, do what he pleases for all that: he may act indeed like a fool and a Brute, yet he is guilty of no sin in the mean time; for where there is no *Justice*, there can be no *fear of punishment*, where there is no punishment, there is no obligation, nor consequently Law; and where there is no Law, there can be no transgression.

So that tho his reason may upbraid him with the folly, his Conscience in this case would never *check him* for the *guilt of his vices*; which if the *Laws of his Country* did not take some care to prevent, he might securely practice without any fear of *Gods displeasure*. In short, notwithstanding all the fine discourses about the beauty and amiableness of religion and virtue; the inclinations of sense would soon bear down the dictates of Reason, and the *slightest temptations* would prove too strong for these *very speculations*; and as to the generality, the conclusion which they would draw from this principle, would be, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we dye*, and after death comes no reckoning or account. *Come on let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the Creatures like as in youth: Let us fill our selves with costly Oyntments, and let no flower of the spring pass by us: Let us crown our selves with Rose-buds before they are withered, Let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness: Let us leave tokens of our joyfulness in every*

every place; for this is our portion, and our Lot is this. Wifd. 2. ver. 6, 7, 8.

But tho this notion overturns all *natural Religion*, yet it is it self effectually overthrown by the dictates of *natural Conscience*, which are an unanswerable proof both of the *existence* and the *Justice of God*: for we must know that Conscience is something more than *bare Reason*: for Reason may *direct*, but Conscience will *prescribe*; Reason gives us a *Rule* for the government of our actions, Conscience passes that *Rule into a Law*, gives it its force and obligation. *The prescribing of a Law is the act of a Superior, and no man is properly Superior to himself, and consequently no man can by his own act, peremptorily oblige himself, except that act be enforced by some other and higher obligation.*

And therefore Conscience is not *bare Reason*, but reason as it is *Gods Vicegerent*, cloathed with his Authority, armed with his Justice: and therefore in a more *Imperious way* it commands our obedience, not only perswading us to our duty, but threatening for the neglect of it: it puts on a *Majestick Aire*, tells us this must be done, or refuse it at your peril: indeed it executes the office, and sustains the person of a *Legislator, a Witness, and a Judge*: first *prescribes* a Law, then *accuses* for our disobedience, and lastly *solemnly arraigns* the Sinner for his guilt, and then passes sentence upon him. So that these actions of Conscience and the Tribunal that God hath erected there, are one of the clearest and most *uncontrolled* proofs of a future Judgement, of which the former are a kind of *Anticipation*.

And indeed if we look back to former times, and consult the History of Ages and Countries, the most ignorant and barbarous, we shall find, that as the Light of Nature hath directed them to the *belief and acknowledgement* of a God; so

1 *Facultas injungendi aliquid per modum Legis aut præcepti infert superioritatem, quemadmodum obligatio parendi arguit nos inferiores esse eo, qui præcipere nobis potest; saltem qua Imperium ejus se extendit: Ob eam causam suis decretis immediate nemo potest obligari irrevocabiliter, Puffendorf. Elem. Jur. Lib. 1. cap. 13. Sect. 4.*

one of the earliest notions that arose in their minds when they have thought of him, hath bin the *Apprehension of his Justice*: of which among other things, the numerous, tho many of them *Impious and Ridiculous rites*, which they made use of to appease the anger of their *incensed Deities*, are an irrefragable Argument. And this apprehension of divine Justice, was, as one of the principal causes, so one of the chiefest, if not the only support of natural Religion in the world.

Now to apply this to our present purpose, and to bring the parts of our argument a little closer together: If men by the light of nature could discover this Attribute of Justice in God, it must unavoidably follow, that Justice in him is natural; for the light of nature can discover nothing in God but what is so: whatever is the effect of Gods *meer pleasure*, and the result of his free will, can never be known but by *Revelation*; and it is impossible it should be otherwise discovered, except we should suppose men to be Omniscient, and that they may know more of God than they can of one another: *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is within him?* 1 Cor. 2. 11. so much less can any man discern the things of God but the spirit of God. He indeed searches the deep things of God, such as are the results of his free pleasure, and the counsel of his will; which lay hidden in the *breast of God*, and must for ever have done so, had not he who lay in the *bosom of his Father*, revealed them unto us: and therefore if justice were, as the *Socinians* tell us, the effect only of Gods free will, it must have lain undiscovered to the Gentile world, to whom God vouchsafed no revelation of his will; which yet is contrary to the account which the Histories of all times and ages have given us of this matter: from whence it is evident that the belief of Gods Justice among men, is *coeval* with that of their being, written in the *same Characters*, and engraven by the *same Hand*, that implanted the notion of a God in the minds of men; and if so, then the same hand that *defaces* the notion of Gods Justice, must at the same time and for the same reason *erase* the belief of his existence out of the Souls of men: and I doubt not if the *Socinians* had lived in those days, by this

Hypothesis of theirs, they would have been extreamly serviceable to *Theodorus*, *Diagoras*, *Democritus*, and *Epicurus*, in the design they were engaged in, of rooting the belief of a God and Religion out of the world; for they might have told men not only with great plausibility but truth (if this opinion were true) that all those *accusations of Conscience*, and *anxieties of Mind*, which were occasioned by the belief and dread of divine Justice, were the effect only of *fancy and delusion*, and did owe their Original not to a divine *Impress*, but to the *Craft and Contrivance* of Priests and Politicians, who instilled into the minds of weak and unwary men, the vain fears of invisible powers; representing them armed with Thunder and with the Sword of Justice in their hands, whereas really there was no such thing; But all this they did to keep the world in awe, and thereby to compass the designs of their *interest and ambition*.

What further design *Socinus* himself might have, or whether he had any other design by advancing this Opinion, than the overturning that great Article of our faith concerning the satisfaction of Christ, I shall not positively determine. Only this I cannot but acquaint the Reader with, which hath bin long since observed likewise by others, that *Socinus* and his followers in all their books and disputations, have made it their business chiefly to cavil and make exceptions to their adversaries, not caring what became of Religion, so that they might with any colour avoid the Arguments with which they were pressed, as is in some measure made evident by several passages which we have quoted out of their writings in the foregoing discourse. And I have this further to add, that as *Socinus*, by denying the *divinity and satisfaction of Christ*, hath plainly overturned the foundation upon which the Christian Church and Religion have bin built: so by this assertion about Gods justice, and by several others dispersed and slyly insinuated through his writings, he hath given a shrewd blow to all Religion whatsoever, whether natural, or revealed; so that an unwary Reader, by perusing his writings, may find himself an *Atheist* before he well perceives how he comes to be so:

as he saith in another case, *viz.* his opinion against Hell Torments, that he had so contrived the matter, *ut lector prius sentiat doctrinam istam sibi jam persuasam esse, quam suaderi animadvertat* ¹.

And now I should come to a conclusion of this discourse about Gods Justice, (which I have spun out to a greater length than I at first intended;) But that I foresee an objection will be made against all that I have said, by the *Socinians* and their friends; who will be apt to say, that I have bin taking a great deal of pains to no purpose, to aggravate the mischiefs of an Opinion, which admit it were false in speculation, yet as it is stated by them can in *point of fact and practice*, carry no inconvenience imaginable along with it.

For whatever God may do when left to his own liberty, yet he hath thought fit to oblige himself by positive promises and threatnings to reward the righteous and to punish the wicked: so that now by the revelation of his will he hath indeed abridged himself of his natural liberty, but hath thereby taken effectual care to secure his own honour, and to establish Religion in the world, and all this is plainly acknowledged by the *Socinians*.

To which I answer, *1st.* that this doth not take off the falsehood and Impiety of this *Socinian* opinion, which I was obliged to discover; any more than if a man should say, that God hath indeed *resolved* to act *wisely and righteously* in the government of the World; but that neither *wisdom nor righteousness are necessary and essential Attributes* perpetually residing in him, but are only the effects of his free will: which were a most irreligious and profane assertion, notwithstanding the former acknowledgment.

2. Tho the *Socinians* hereby take care of revealed, yet they overturn all natural Religion, as we shewed before, where God hath made no such Revelation of his will, or discovery of his intentions how he doth design to deal with men;

and so as far as in them lies, by this principle, they help to make the ¹ much greatest part of mankind Atheists.

3ly. When God hath declared his purpose, and hath accordingly given men Laws for the government of their actions, and hath to those Laws expressly annexed the sanctions of *rewards and punishments*, yet according to the *Socinian principles*, this doth not sufficiently encourage men in *virtuous practices*, nor lay an *effectual restraint* upon the wicked.

1st. As to rewards it is true the Gospel affords us, as the Apostle tells us, exceeding great and precious promises ² *Pet.* 1. 4. which exceed not only our *deserts*, but our *hopes*: But what absolute assurance have we that they shall be made good to us. They are only the effects as *Socinus* tells us *Liberæ*, or as *Vorstius* explains it, *vertibilis voluntatis*, not only of a *free*, (for therein we agree with them,) but of a mutable will: for according to them, as was shewed before, God is *liable to alterations*, and may *change* his purpose as he doth the weather, *sicut potest pluere vel non pluere*: and tho the Morning proves never so fair, yet the Heavens may be overcast; and the Sun that rose so gloriously, may set in a Cloud.

In short, if we believe the *Socinians*, the promises of God considered barely in themselves are not a sufficient Basis for a Christians hope and security; forasmuch as God being ² *mutable in his nature*, he may *repent* of what he promised, and *change and alter* his Resolution. And that the Reader may not think that I have wronged the *Socinians* in laying this to their charge, I must refer him to a Treatise writ by *Crellius*, *de Causis Mortis Christi*; where he will find this that I have affirmed of them abundantly made good. For there he tells us that the true reason of Christs dying for us, was that thereby he might be a *Mediator*, and surety of the *Covenant* which God hath made with men; for tho God had given men the promise of pardon of their sins, yet that promise was no *sufficient security*, because he might have receded or started from it: Therefore to

¹ See Breerwoods Enquiries, Cap. 14. ² *Voluntas Dei est principium cujusdam mutabilitatis in Deo*, Vorst. Disp. p. 212.

fix him as it were to his word, Christ was sent as a sponſor and ſurety of the New Teſtament, which, in the name of his Father, he did confirm and ratify, by ſealing it with his Blood; whereupon now God is *obliged* to make good his promiſe, ſo that if he had a mind to revoke it he cannot, the Death of Chriſt *compelling* him to preſerve it ¹.

Indeed he could not but be ſenſible, that what he had thus delivered, would ſound harſhly in the Ears of moſt Readers, thoſe eſpecially who had any concern for the Honour of their Maker, which by this ſuppoſition was ſo highly and ſcandalouſly invaded: therefore to mollify this matter he tells us, that the efficacy which he aſcribes to Chriſts Death, was not abſolutely neceſſary in reſpect of God; whoſe own Love, Grace and Mercy, might *move and encline him* to make good his promiſe; yet however this put him under no *obligation*; for if it had, there had bin no need of the *death of Chriſt*, either in *reſpect of God, or our ſelves*, either to have tyed him to the performance, or to have afforded us ſecurity.

Therefore he tells us ², that we might have a firm bottom for our hope, that if we believed in Chriſt, that is, obeyed his Goſpel, our ſins ſhould be forgiven us; it highly concerned us that God ſhould be *obliged* to perform what he had promiſed; and not only ſo, but that we might acquire a *Right* to pardon; which right he founds not in the *promiſe of God* but the Death of Chriſt, which he ſaith gives us ſuch an undoubted Title to Mercy, and that ſupported by ſuch a firm and manifeſt aſſurance and proof, as will not ſuffer God whatever may happen, to *break his word, and recall his promiſe*. ³ And

¹ *Vis atque efficacia mortis Chriſti ad remiſſionem peccatorum comparandam tanta eſt, ut etiam Deum, ſi forte eum promiſſionis ſuæ de remiſſione peccatorum, & liberatione ab interitu nobis concedenda pæniteret (utimur pbraſi ſacris literis uſitatâ) movere atque impellere poſſit, ne promiſſum ſuum reſcinderet, ſed quod pollicitus eſſet, reiſa præſtaret* Crell. de Cauſis Mortis Chriſti. p. 613. ² Nam ut nos tanto certius credere poſſemus, nobis in Chriſtum credentibus peccata remiſſum iri, plurimum referebat Deum ad id faciendum obligatum eſſe, & nos juſ-ad illud obtinendum habere; juſ inquam maniſeſtiſſimis ac certiffimis documentis nixum, quod jam quicquid tandem interveniret, Deum non pateretur promiſſa ſua reſcindere, Ibid. ³ Hic revera ſinis ac ſcopus fuit, cur Deus Morte Chriſti ſe nobis obligare voluerit, ut porro ad Chriſtum morti tradendum impuſus fuerit, Ibid.

this he tells us was the true reason of Christs coming into the world, and of Gods delivering him up to death for our sakes.

By all which it is evident, that in the opinion of this man, the *promises* of God considered nakedly in themselves, do not afford us a *sufficient security*; forasmuch as something may intervene, which may cause God to *repent* of what he promised, and thereby hinder the performance: and that you may not think that he had *forgot himself*, by making an *impious or impossible supposition*, he tells us, *utimur phrasi sacris literis usitata*; that he used a phrase which was frequently made use of in the Scripture it self, which often mentions Gods sorrow and repentance, and therefore it can be no disparagement to Almighty God to ascribe it to him, it being rather in their opinion an argument of his wisdom, as was shewed before.

I must indeed acknowledge that this very Author at another time, *Lib. De Deo. Cap. 25. de Sanctitate Dei. p. 241.* affirms that the promises of God put him under an obligation, and that both his veracity and faithfulness engage him to make them good. But it is as evident on the other hand, that here he *supposes the contrary*, and that his Argument proceeds upon that *supposition*. But by this time I hope the Reader will not be much surpris'd to find Socinians *contradicting themselves*, and he need not be concerned at it; for I can assure him, whether he will or no, they will take the liberty of so doing. And hereby we find the observation which we a little before made concerning them, confirmed; *viz.* that in their disputations and writings they care not what they say, having no regard to the honour of God or Religion; being only concerned for their own reputation, and to defend and maintain their own *loose and unwarrantable Opinions*.

2ly, But let us admit that God by his *promises* puts himself under an obligation to men, so that he cannot go from his word, but is obliged to make it good; yet he may be at *greater liberty* as to his *threatnings*. Indeed these, as the Gospel represents them to us, are very terrible, whether we consider the punishments threatned either as to their *Intensive pain*, or

as to the extent of their duration; for we are told that *the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; that the worm that gnaws their Conscience shall not dye, and the fire that torments them shall never be extinguished.* This is indeed enough to make the sinner look pale, and to fright him either out of his wits, or out of his wicked course of living. But for all this he need not despair of Mercy; for tho God hath *threatned severely*, yet no man living can absolutely tell us, if we believe *Socinus*, whether he is resolved to *execute his threatnings*. For as at first God might either not have punished the Sinner at all, or not with eternal death, so now tho he hath declared by his solemn Edict that he will do so, yet for all that he may if he pleases not insist the punishment. Deus potuisset, idque jure, homines licet peccantes morti æternæ non mancipare, sic postquam eos morti æternæ edicto suo mancipavit, ex illius imperio eximere potest. *Socin. de Christo Serv. Lib. 1. p. 124.*

Eximere potest, saith *Socinus*, he may exempt the Sinner notwithstanding his Decree of punishing him; and why may not he hope that he will: the bare threatnings, according to *Socinus*, do not oblige God to execute them: and the consideration of Gods Mercy and Justice, to which the Torments of Hell, as he may imagine, can scarce be reconciled, may upon that score afford him some ground to hope that he doth not design to do so. We know sinners are apt to allow themselves, as too great liberty in sinning, so to flatter themselves with too great hopes of Impunity; and if they meet with any such compassionate Casuists as *Socinus*, who will afford them any encouragement, they are presently apt to run away with it, and never look back, to see that *vengeance* which pursues, and will at length certainly overtake them.

But how comes this man to know any thing of God besides what he hath revealed of himself in his word? must we have recourse to that exploded distinction of the *Calvinists*, and for which they have bin so much railed at by their adversaries, concerning the *revealed, and the secret will of God*? For tho the question in the case may seem to be about the *power* of God, yet really and in truth it is about *his will*; forasmuch

as God *cannot* do what he hath solemnly declared he *will not* do; and that for this *plain* and *irrefragable reason*, because God cannot deny himself.

And now have we not reason to put the question, and enquire, whither went the Spirit of God from the *Inspired writers*, to rest upon the head of this *Impostor*, who makes his *exceptions* to what they have declared as the *peremptory and unalterable decree of God*? Nay who boldly ventures to affirm that, which *Balaam* could not be *bired* to utter, tho *tempted to it by the wages of unrighteousness*; but makes that pious acknowledgement *Numb. 23. God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Now if it be *Impossible for God to lie*, then it is not possible for him to alter the sentence concerning the final state of men; which is delivered in Scripture in such terms, as plainly evince it to be his *peremptory and irrevocable decree*: The happiness of the Righteous, and the punishments of the wicked, as to the *extent of their duration*, being expressed in the same words, and in the same sentence: and if it be possible to know any thing of the *Absolute and Immutable pleasure* of God; the *wit* of man could not contrive any plainer words, then what the *wisdom of God* hath already made use of, to declare his final and unalterable intentions, concerning the everlasting punishment of the wicked.

Besides it deserves to be considered, that this Declaration is not only delivered in the manner of a *threatning*, but likewise by way of *prediction*; in the fulfilling of which, the veracity of God may seem to be more particularly concerned, than in the execution of a bare Threatning delivered in a Sermon, or Exhortation, or the like. Now in those *glorious visions* which were communicated to *St. John* which he styles *the word of God, the Testimony and Revelation of Jesus Christ, concerning the things which were, and which should be hereafter*, *Rev. 1. v. 1, 2, 19.* which are styled the *true sayings of God*, *chap. 19. v. 9. the words that are faithful and true* *ch. 21. v. 5.* I say in these visions are contained, as the state and events of the Church till the final dissolution of all things; so likewise the condition and fate of the Righteous and

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Wicked,

Wicked, after the judgment of the last day. *Ch. 20. 21.* he tells us that he *saw the dead, both small and great, stand before God, and they were all judged according to their works, and whoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of fire, ver. 15. called ver. 10. the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Devil, and the Beast, and the false Prophet shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

And what is said in general of the wicked, we are assured shall betide the *fearful, and unbelievers, and the abominable and murderers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, who shall have their part in that lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. 21. 8.* this is that Furnace of fire which our blessed Saviour so often mentioneth, *Mat. 13. 42. 50. that everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his Angels, Mat. 25. 41. That fire, which again and again he assures us Mark. 9. shall not be quenched, no less then five times within the compass of six verses, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. to declare unto us by this Repetition, the certainty of this thing, as in the case of Pharaoh's Dream, which was doubled to assure him that the thing was established by God. Gen. 41. 32.*

The wit of man could not find out words more full and significant, to express the *eternal duration* of these punishments, and Gods *unalterable purpose* to inflict them. Now to say, notwithstanding all this, that yet in the conclusion, things may happen to be otherwise then what the *Son of God* hath declared, and this *servant of God* hath foretold, is with great boldness to contradict them both: and if it be *possible* that these predictions may not be accomplished, then the words are not *faithful and true*, that is, are not undoubtedly and absolutely true: so that at the same time, that *Socinus* puts an end to the certainty of Hell Torments, he doth likewise put an end to the certainty of the writings of the New Testament, and the predictions that are contained there: which is highly derogatory to the Authority of those sacred Writings, and particularly of the Revelation of *St. Sohn*; which looks too much like the *taking away from the words of the Prophecy of that Book*; which yet I hope it is not, because of that dreadful punishment which attends those that do so, *Rev. 22. 19.* In short, if

things *may happen* otherwise than St. John foresaw and foretold, some Scepticks and Infidels, which the age we live in doth too much abound with, may be apt to account that a *dream*, which he calls a *vision*; and to think, the holy man was *scarce awake* when he pretended to *foresee* these things.

Neither ought the case of *Temporal threatnings* be objected here in favour of Socinus's assertion: forasmuch as God himself hath told us, that in all such *Threatnings*, a condition is to be *supposed*, tho' it be not alwaies *expressed*; so that tho' they are delivered in terms *seemingly absolute*, yet God without any impeachment of his *veracity*, may upon the performance of the condition *revoke* them. *At what instant*, saith God, *I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: if that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil, that I thought to do unto them, Jer. 18. 7. 8.* and this was the case of *Nimveh*, where tho' the threatening was seemingly peremptory, yet the execution was suspended upon their *Repentance*, which was the *end* of the threatening.

But as to the punishments of the life to come, the threatnings of them must be *absolute and unconditional*, forasmuch as there can then be no room for *Repentance and amendment*: every mans state will then be finally determined: *he that is filthy will be filthy still*, without any possibility of change, or hope of pardon: and this is that which fills up the measure of the punishment of the damned: he that sinned without the *fear of God* in this life, shall be punished *without Mercy* in the next; and this despair will be that worm which will feed upon him to all eternity, which shall ever torment, but never devour the sinner, who will then become a terror to himself and an everlasting amazement.

In short therefore, and to summ up all that remains to be said upon this subject; he that goes about to *weaken the force* of those declarations which God hath made concerning the *eternal punishment* of the wicked, gives a *dangerous blow* to all revealed Religion, of which we can have no *certainty*, if once we undermine the *veracity of God*, which is the *foundation up-*

on which it is built, and by which it is supported. But you will say the hopes which *Socinus* gives the sinner are but very slender, and those remote ones, which no man in point of prudence or safety should venture to rely upon. I confess I think so too: but for all this sinners will be bold and presumptuous: and you cannot wonder that men should grasp at any thing; lay hold upon any the *weakest twig*, rather than *sink* into Hell. But if this be not enough, *Socinus* can give the sinner more positive and direct encouragement; such as will not only put an end to the *Torments of Hell*, but likewise to his own *vain and superstitious fears* concerning them, and will *extinguish* those flames, which our blessed Saviour (who one would think should best know) hath assured us are *unquenchable*: But of this more hereafter.

Now if what hath bin hitherto said is not sufficient to shew the *impiety and detestableness* of these *Socinian* notions, he that will be at the pains to peruse their writings, or will but have the patience to read what is here transcribed out of them, will find (if it were possible) yet greater abominations than these: particularly in the account which they give of those *affections and passions* which they ascribe to God, and with which indeed the Scriptures represent him to us, but in a quite different sense than they are understood and interpreted by the *Socinians*; who give us such a description of Almighty God as is *repugnant to piety*, and to the *general sentiments*; not only of all sound Christians, but even of Jews, and many sober heathens, who have had *truer and more honourable* conceptions of the nature of God, than these men furnish us with; who cloath him with all the *passions and weakneses of men*, ascribing to him *love and hatred, mercy and compassion, hope and desire, joy and sorrow, fear and repentance*, which they make to be *truly and properly* in God, tho not exactly in the same manner as they are in men, no more than they are in other created spirits, or the Soul of man it self in its state of separation from the Body: that is, they are there, but without any motion, or *sensible alteration* of the *Blood and Spirits*, such as is to be found in men. But our Religion and right reason will inform us,

That these things are attributed to God, but it is *anōplēmatōs*, in a figurative sense, representing thereby to us the various administrations of Gods providence towards divers objects, who as they are endued with *different qualities and dispositions*, so God is pleased to exercise *different actions* towards them; which actions in men indeed arise from *different principles and passions*, but do not so in God, who amidst the variety of the actions and dispositions of men, and his dealings suitably to them, yet in his essence *continues still the same*, without any perturbation or the least shadow of change. And therefore Divines tell us, and particularly Limburg, that these things are ascribed to God, not with respect to God, but with a regard to those objects about which the acts of his providence are conversant, according to that known maxime of the School-men, *affectus in deo notant effectus*; and so far he is *Orthodox*: but a little after in the same Section he *overthrows* what but just before he asserted, and so interprets and explains himself, that a Socinian cannot be displeased with his Opinion.

For first he makes these affections to be acts, or as *Crallius* calls them commotions of Gods will, which some have thought could not be properly ascribed to him, without overthrowing the simplicity as well as immutability of his divine nature. But to let that pass.

2. He makes these passions in God to be *Analogous* to those in men, without which *Analogy*, or resemblance, there is no reason, he saith, why the Scriptures should ascribe them to God. *Si nihil illis Analogum Deo tribuamus, nulla apparebit ratio, cur iisdem cum affectibus humanis nominibus appellentur*. So saith Limburg, *Lac. supra citat. sunt enim in nobis affectus commotionis quidam atque inclinationes appetitus, cui vim facultatemque Analogam vo-*

1 Non cum relatione ad ipsum Deum, sed in ordine ad ipsa objecta, quæ extra deum sunt, circa quæ Deus operatur Lib. 2. Cap. 10. 2 See Episcopi *trist of whom* Limburg hath transcribed his Divinity. Inst. Th. Lib. 4. cap. 22. Quod non sic accipiendum est quasi affectus nulli proprie ac per se Deo competant: contra enim in Deo credimus affectum esse. Natura divinorum affectionum vix aliter à nobis concipi atque aestimari potest, quam ex natura affectionum humanorum, scilicet per similitudinem & Analogiam quam habent cum affectibus humanis.

lunas divina in se complectitur. So saith Crellius Cap. 26. p. 197. and here I think they perfectly agree. But for once we will make so bold as to ask these Gentlemen, whether when the Scriptures attribute *hands and feet, and eyes and ears* to God, they think that there is something in the nature of God that is *Analogous*, and bears any *resemblance* to these parts of a mans Body, without which they could not with any reason be applied to him.

Tho I have reason not to be over confident of a Socinian, yet in this case I will take it for granted, they would both answer in the negative, and that there were here no *ἀναλογία*, but what the Fathers, and particularly St. Chrysostome upon many occasions so often mention, *συγκατάβασις*, nay there is *μέγας* & *ὑπερβολή*, or, if in imitation of St. Paul you will joyn these two words together, there is *ὑπερβαλλόν μέγας* τῆς *συγκαταβάσεως*; nothing to be supposed in God by way of resemblance, but an exceeding great and adorable condescension in him, who stoops to our capacities, and expresses some *properties and operations* of his, by such parts, which are the *Instruments* of the like operations in men.

So with the same truth, and for the same reason it should be averred, when *human passions* are ascribed to God, it is not by reason of any *resemblance* that is between God and Men in *these affections*; but by reason of that *Analogy or similitude* that is to be found between the *operations* of God, and these *actions* of men; which in them arise from such *commotions* of the Soul which we call passions, but in God proceed from his *simple and uncompounded nature*, who is Infinite and unchangeable, and therefore as our Church in conformity to the Scriptures hath taught us to believe, *is without parts and without passions.*
Article 1st.

The *Impiety* of this opinion will further appear from a consideration of those *particular passions* which the Socinians affirm to be in God; which cannot truly be ascribed to him, without a great *disparagement* to his Infinite and adorable perfections, and those are *Fear and Grief*: under which we must comprehend sorrow and repentance, which properly respect

things past, whereas grief and trouble which alwaies attend it indifferently respect things either past or present. And these are passions which necessarily infer a weakness in God, such as a Stoick would not allow in his wise and virtuous man.

And first for fear, *Crellius* will tell us that tho' at first view this passion cannot without a seeming absurdity be attributed to God, yet he is truly lyable to it, and indeed it is the necessary effect of his wisdom, as it is conversant about creatures prone and lyable to sin. And this he proves from Deut. 22. 26, 27. *I said I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the Enemy, lest their adversaries should say, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.* And then refers you to two other places before mentioned, *Exod. 32.* and *Numb. 14.* where we have instances, as he tells us, of Gods altering his purpose of destroying the Children of Israel, out of this principle of fear¹: lest the Heathens and particularly the Egyptians, should misconstrue his actions, and for want of knowing the true reasons which moved him to this severity, impute it either to a malicious design, as if he had rescued them out of the hands, and delivered them from the Tyranny of Pharaoh, that he might have the Glory of their overthrow in the wilderness: or else to his Impotence that he was not able to compleat their deliverance, and to bring them into the Land which he had so often promised them. Now God to save his honour which else might have suffered by this action, and to prevent the upbraidings of his Enemies, which he was extreemly afraid of, was prevailed upon by the Entreaties of Moses, and the reasons which he offered, to spare those, whom in his thoughts he had solemnly devoted to destruction.

He further refers his reader to several other places where God

¹ Sapientie ipsius, quatenus circa creaturas versatur in peccata pronas, effectum esse prope necessarium. Cap. 31. p. 324. ² Moses Deum à proposito perdendi populi Israelitici, revocasse dicitur. Argumento metuendi mali Eventus; quod scilicet Hostes Deum essent calumniaturi, videtur Deus hunc eventum, utpote sua natura possibilem, suo modo metuisse, & propterea à proposito suo recessisse. Vorst. Notæ ad Disput. 10. p. 451.

is said to do something which otherwife he was unwilling to do, or to omit the doing of something which before he was resolved upon, as *Gen. 5. 22. Exod. 15. 17. 35. 3. &c.* out of a just fear of what might happen: and this is so far from being with him an Argument of Imperfection, that he saith it is the result of wisdom and a just caution, in foreseeing some probable events, and thus wisely preventing them. *Ibid.*

2. For grief and trouble, these likewise by the same Metaphor are to be ascribed to God, that is, saith *Crellius*, forasmuch as all Metaphors arise from *similitude*, something like these must be found in him. And for proof of this he quotes all those places of Scripture, where God is said to be provoked, to be displeased and grieved, *Pf. 78. 40, 46. Pf. 106. 33. Esay. 3. 8. 2 Sam. 11. 27.* and particularly that memorable place, *Esay. 1. 14.* where God is said to hate the New Moons and Feasts of the Jews, they are a trouble to me saith God, I am weary to bear them. Where he hath this remark *Cap. 31. p. 319.* these things are then said to be troublesome to us, and which we cannot well bear, which bring uneasiness and a certain disquiet along with them. And to say and think this of God, is so far from tending to his dishonour, that the contrary conceit would overthrow all Religion, forasmuch as it would introduce an Opinion concerning God fit only for *Stoicks* and *Epicureans* to entertain of him: *quis enim*, saith he, who can form such a notion of God, as of one that is not affected with pleasure, nor sensible of pain, *nisi qui ad Epicureorum vel Stoicorum saltem sententiam de Deo accedere vult? Loc. citat. 321.* a God enjoying pure and unmixed pleasure, perfect rest and an uninterrupted tranquillity, never disturbed with passions, nor disordered by any of the actions of men, or the changes and revolutions that happen in the world; this doctrine concerning him is fit not to be preached in the Temples of Christians, but to be published in the Schools of *Zeno* and *Epicurus*. Indeed we are beholding to him for that liberal concession, that this trouble and

1 *Ea Demum molesta sunt, & in illis sustinendis laboramus, quæ dolorem aliquem nobis afferunt.*

grief which he supposes to be in God, doth not arise from any *Internal causes*, such as are the indispositions of Body or mind which occasion grief in men, and make them uneasy: but only from *external motives and reasons*, viz. the actions of his creatures¹. So that what God cannot do himself, he hath put it into the *power of his Creatures to effect*, and that if it were not for the *follies and impieties of men* he would be *entirely happy, perfectly at rest*; all that grief and trouble which affects him, is solely owing to the actions of his creatures, and not to any disorder of his own nature: A very pious acknowledgment!

Lastly, for that sort of *grief* which respects things past, which we call *Repentance*, this likewise is to be found in God: and not that only which signifies the *alteration of his Counsels*, or a change of his will, of which we have spoken before (which may indeed be called *Repentance*), but that *saith Cretellius is dilutior Metaphora* *) but as it betokens the *passion and affection* it self. And for this he quotes *Gen. 6. 7.* where it is said, that God repented that he made man, and that it grieved him at the heart. This is *affectio in deo ingrata*, *Ibid.* an affection that brings *molestation* with it, arising in God when he sees that those his actions which were so well designed by him, by the folly and malice of men, are so far perverted, as to produce effects so contrary to his *Intentions*.

Now against all this it would be very natural for men to object, and the Socinian easily foresaw it, That what is thus asserted, must be quite contrary to the sense of mankind, and to those notions which *naturally arise* in mens minds concerning the *perfections of Almighty God*; for to suppose such *variety of commotions* in the mind of God, and these sometime *opposite* to ane another, which cannot but occasion in him *molestation and trouble*; which must be further increased, when he finds his *designs baffled*, his *Councils overthrown*, his *authority despoised*; which obliges him oftentimes to *change* his own pur-

¹ *Ex rebus extra deum existentibus, quas in creaturarum arbitrio posuit*, *Ibid.* p. 320. *Ibid.* p. 322.

poses, and *revoke* his decrees: one would think that all this should really be not only a *derogation* to his *Infinite perfections*, but likewise a *diminution* of his *happyness*.

1st. As to what concerns the *perfections of God*, *Crellius* will tell you, that nothing of all this that is asserted of the nature of God is an Argument of *Imperfection*. It is true, he hath not the same notions of the perfections of God as you have. You may perhaps think him Infinite, but that is a weakness in you to think so: he is *finite* in his *being*, and consequently must be so in his *Operations*: he is *limited* in his presence to certain spaces: his knowledge hath its *just bounds*; he is mutable and lyable to change: he is *extended* and for that reason must be made up of parts; in him you may find a *composition* of substance and accidents, and these oftentimes contrary to one another: he is cloathed with passions, which have such a resemblance to those *weaknesses of our nature*, that from a consideration of humane passions, we must make a judgement and frame our apprehensions of those motions which are to be found in God.

And these *motions* in God are sometimes more *calme*, at other times more *violent and impetuous*, the Impieties of men provoking him to that degree that he is earnestly bent upon their destruction, but afterwards calmed by their prayers: now *angry* at men for their Sins, by and by *appeased* by their Repentance. Sometimes you will find him doing a thing, by and by *repenting* the doing of it; one while *resolved* upon one action, and anon resolving the *quite contrary*: and all this to be found truly and formally in God, and not in that figurative sense in which the Scriptures ascribe them to him. For saith the same Author, separate all impurity from those passions, all *corporeal mixture*, nay it must be *concretio terreni corporis*, the mixture of a terrestrial body, that you may not mistake him: for there is a *spiritual Body*, and *Celestial matter* which may be-

† Ex affectuum humanorum natura, à quibus ipse Dei spiritus ob Analogiam, ac similitudinem vocis ad Deum transfert, æstimanda nobiserit natura illorum voluntatis Dei actuum. Cap. 29. de Affect. Dei. p. 297.

long to God himself: in short exclude all Impotence and Imperfection from these affections, (and indeed it must be a very nice and Metaphysical abstraction that is able to do it) and then whatever remains in the *true notion* and *formal conception* of these passions, are still to be supposed and must be left there, when applyed to God himself. *Sejungenda quæcunque Imperfectionem aut Imbecillitatem respiciunt, cætera, quæ in natura cernuntur affectuum illorum, quorum nomina deo tribuuntur, esse relinquenda.* Ibid.

But however tho this should prove no *Imperfection*, yet the *uneasiness* and *disquiet*, that is the inseparable attendant on grief, and fear, and sorrow, those *tormenting passions*, must, one would think, *interrupt that tranquillity* which we suppose God to be posselt of, and consequently be an *abatement of his happiness*.

To which he answers first in general, ¹ that as we ought not indeed to urge any expressions in Scripture, so far as to oppose the *happyness of God*; so neither on the other hand ought we to urge the *belief of his happyness*, so as to affirm him not to have a true sense of evil, mixt with *uneasiness*.

But more particularly, you must consider in this case that tho men by their Sins ² may *grieve* God, yet they cannot *hurt him*: tho they may disturb, yet they cannot deprive him, of any of his essential perfections. That is something, but not enough; for among men we are apt to account it an *unhappyness* to be robbed of our ease and quiet, tho they that do so should not have it in their power to deprive us of any thing else.

Therefore 2/y, tho there are some things of that force as to be able to create *dolorem & molestiam*, *grief and molestation* to God; yet the number of those other things which afforde him satisfaction and pleasure, do so far exceed and overballance them, that they do much *abate* the trouble and uneasiness that is oc-

¹ Ut jucundum quendam rerum malarum sensum ei tribuere non liceat. Idem Cap. 31. p. 321. ² Ea quæ voluntati divinæ adversa sunt, illius beatitudinem non convertunt aut ledunt. Ibid. ³ Ut vim ingratarum rerum & molestiam quam parere possunt, aut tollunt, aut imminuunt, p. 321.

caſioned by them: a Bleſſed Apology for the *perfections and happineſs* of Almighty God!

And thus much ſhall ſerve to be ſaid upon the firſt head, concerning the nature of God conſidered abſolutely in himſelf, and his divine attributes; by which we may ſee the difference between what the *Scriptures* ſay, and what the *Socinians* affirm of him: and I doubt not but the pious Reader, will not only be *offended*, but ſtruck with a *juſt horror and amazement*, at the boldneſs and impiety of theſe blaſphemers, who are thus injurious to their maker, and think and ſpeak thus diſhonourably of him. But how little regard, and how mean ſoever their *conceptions* be of God, yet they have a *good opinion* of themſelves; in that they make not only their *reaſon* to be the *adequate Judge* of his revelations, but even their own *paſſions and weakneſs*, the rule by which they meaſure, at leaſt make an eſtimate of his *infinite nature* and moſt *adorable perfections*; an attempt, beſides the impiety of it, more ridiculous, then if a man ſhould endeavour to take the dimensions of the Heavens with a ſingle ſpan, or to fathome the depth and reach the bottom of the Ocean with his little finger.

In the next place we muſt conſider God *Relatively* in the great myſtery of the *Trinity*. And that which the *Scriptures* teach us to believe of this matter, is briefly ſummed up in the firſt Article of our Religion eſtabliſhed in this Church concerning faith in the *Holy Trinity*, in theſe words; *In the unity of the Godhead there be three perſons, of one ſubſtance, Power and Eternity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*. Or as it is with ſome alteration of words, but to the ſame purpoſe expreſſed, in the *Doxology* to be repeated upon Trinity Sunday; where-in we are taught to make this acknowledgement of Almighty God, *That he is one God, one Lord, not one only perſon, but three perſons in one ſubſtance; for that which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the ſame we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, without any difference or inequality*. A brief but *comprehenſive* Epitome, of what is more largely declared and explained, in the Creed, which the *Socinians* and *Remonſtrants* have ſo great a ſpight againſt, commonly called the *Athanaſian Creed*.

This is the Faith of all the *Reformed Churches*, being herein Agreeable to the doctrine held by the Church of God in all Ages, ever since the first planting of Christianity in the world; what we and they believe of this matter, being conformable to the plain and express declarations of Scripture, and especially of what Christ and his Apostles have delivered to us concerning this matter, in the writings of the *New Testament*. For this you may consult the *Harmony of their Confessions*; both *Lutheran and Calvinist* all exactly agreeing in this doctrine, without any the least difference or variety: where you may likewise see the consent of the Catholick Church from the first Ages next to that of the *Apostles*, from whose inspired writings the Fathers received this Doctrine, which by an *uninterrupted Tradition*, thro all the successive Ages of the Church, hath bin delivered and brought down to the times we live in: In this Faith we have all bin *baptized*, being at our first admission into the Christian Church, solemnly *consecrated* to the worship and service of those three ever blessed and glorious persons, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* *Mat. 28*. These being the three that bear witness in Heaven, and these three are one, 1 *Jo. 5. 7*.

For that Text we shall not easily part with, notwithstanding the Cavils of the *Socinians*, and the *over officious endeavours* of some others, whether *Papists or Protestants*, who would weaken the Authority of that Testimony, and thereby rob us of the advantage of it. For tho some Greek MSS. want it, yet there are others more approved and of greater antiquity in which you may meet with it. Besides it is to be found in the writings of the Ancients, *Tertull. Cypr. Athanasius*, and *Jerome* who quote these very words: and if you have a mind to know more of this matter, without going any further, you may peruse what Mr. *Poole* in his *Synopsis* hath quoted out of *Gerhard, Dr. Hamond* and other Writers in vindication of this Text.

From which, I think, it will appear, that the *Authority* of this place remains clear and in full force, notwithstanding the attempts that have bin made to overthrow it. Tho if we gave up this Text, yet we should not the holy Doctrine contained

in it, which is so plainly delivered in other places of Scripture, and shines there with so *bright a lustre*, that a man had need wink hard, who would avoid the conviction; or else must have so great a confidence in his Eyes, that he may hope in time to stare the Sun it self out of countenance.

For as in some places of Scripture he will find the *unity of the Godhead* asserted; so in others he will find the name, and not only so, but to avoid any Cavils and exceptions that may be made about the ambiguous signification of that word; he will find the *same divine Attributes, and Operations*, on all hands acknowledged to belong to God the Father, ascribed likewise to the Son and the Holy Ghost; who yet are allwaies mentioned as distinct from one another: from whence by an easie and a *necessary deduction*, it must unavoidably follow, that since they are *really distinguished* from each other, and yet agree in the same *common nature*, as the *same properties* and the same *operations* irrefragably evince; they must be, what we have bin taught hitherto to believe and profess of them, in the Language of the Church, three Persons and one God. And as we pretend to agree in the same doctrine with the Ancient Church, so I think it is highly fitting, and for many just reasons in a manner necessary, to preserve the same words in which it hath bin delivered down to us, in opposition to any new modes of speaking. For the Ancient words by *prescription* and long use, have obtained both a *just Authority* among Christians, and a *settled and determinate signification*: whereas new phrases may be liable to great exceptions, and introductive at long run of new and unwarrantable opinions about these mysteries; beyond the intention of them who first made use of them.

Now against all this the *Socinians* will tell you, that this doctrine concerning the Trinity is so far from being a *fundamental truth*, that it is indeed the *foundation* of all the errors that have crept into the Christian Church; as being opposite to the Scriptures, and plainly repugnant to reason: it is a *Papish doctrine*, so saith Socinus Lib. *quod Regni Polon.* &c. cap. 4. so *Wessing. Lib. de Offic. Hominis Christiani*, and by so saying they do

exceedingly advance the Reputation of Popery, by making it of so great and venerable antiquity, embraced by all sound Christians ever since the Apostles days. It is a *Paganish opinion*, *Ethnicismum* *sapit*, so saith *Smalcus*, *Exam. Cent. Err.* So opposite to reason, that it is a wonder how any man in his wits could ever have thought of it. So saith *Ostorod.* he cannot imagine, *quomodo homini ulli ratione prædito in mentem venire posset.* *Inst. Rel. Christianæ* Cap. 4. that is, sure it could never have entred into any mans head, that ever had any brains there. Nay it is not only a very foolish, but a very dangerous error, that puts a stumbling block, and rub in mens way to Heaven. Strange that that doctrine should be thought an hindrance to mens happiness, the belief of which by all good Christians hath hitherto bin thought necessary to salvation: but so it is if you believe *Socinus*, *Lib. supra cit. eodem cap.*

And indeed it is no wonder it should hinder men from going to Heaven, if it be true that *Volkel.* tells us, that this doctrine of the Trinity is not an Error that is owing to the ignorance and mistakes of Men, but to the delusion of the Devil¹. That it is a blasphemous Doctrine as another of them saith², hatched in Hell, and from thence fetched by the Son of Perdition, and obtruded upon the Church. And if this be so, I I must profess my self to be of the same mind with³ *Smal.* and to hope with him, that this absurd and most false doctrine as he calls it, will shortly be chased and hissed out of the World.

But farther, particularly concerning Christ, they tell us that he had no existence before his formation in the womb of the Virgin: and the being which he then had was purely humane, and therefore what is said of the Divinity of Christ is a mere fable⁴, owing to senseless and absurd interpretations of Holy Scripture⁵. The Account of his Eternal Gene-

¹ Volkel. de Vera Relig. Lib. 5. Cap. 9. ² Sunt blasphema Dogmata, ex imo Orco, per filium perditionis Ecclesiis Gentium, virtute Satana obtrusa, Theod. Schimberg. citat. à Gerhardo in Exeg. Loc. 3. de Trin. ³ Propediem Exsibilabitur ista absurdissima simul, & falsissima de dei essentia Opinio. Smal. Contra Franz. ⁴ Smal. Refut. Smig. Fabula ista mundo tunc non innotuerat. ⁵ Facessant hæc imperitæ ac absurdæ interpretationes, Socin. in 5. Cap. 1. Epist. Johan. ver. 20.

ration, is a meer *Romance, false, impossible*, a plain contradiction¹; the² contrivance of some idle trifling persons, who had nothing else to do but to invent such absurd and incredible notions. Here by the way, I must desire the Reader to take notice not only of the impiety, but likewise of the unparallel'd impudence and scurrility of these blasphemers, and consequently whether it be fit to entertain any favourable opinion, of the doctrines of these men, and much more to have their *Persons and Writings in admiration*.

2ly, Concerning the Spirit of God; they tell us that he is not a Person, as the Church of God hath hitherto vainly imagined: but only a quality, an accident; sometimes taken for the *Innate power* and virtue residing in God, and sometimes for the *operations* that proceed from that virtue and faculty³. *Trellius* hath written a particular Treatise *de Spiritu Sancto*, and therein he tells us that the word spirit, in its first and proper signification, denotes⁴ that breath which is expired out of the mouths of Men or other Animals; and from the *resemblance* that is to be found between them, it is transferred to signify that divine virtue in God which we call the Holy Ghost: and therefore when Christ, *Joh. 20. 22.* breathed on his Disciples, and thereby conferred upon them the Holy Ghost; he did thereby give them to understand, that the holy spirit was an *Emanation from God, not unlike a vapour or breathing*. At this rate the Holy Ghost should it seems be a subtile and tenuous substance, contrary to what he asserts *cap. 1.* where he plainly tells us that the Spirit of God is not properly a substance but a quality, therefore called in the Scripture the power of the most High, & *virtus proprie qualitas est*, p. 466.

But forasmuch as many things, by his own acknowledgment, are affirmed of, and actions ascribed to the Holy Ghost, which

¹ *Nugæ, falsum, impossibile, contradictionem implicat.* Smal. Refut. Smigl. ad Nova Monst. Ar. ² Idem Refut. Lib. de Incarn. cap. 3. *Vanissimum Commentum otiosorum Hominum.* ³ Vid Smal. Refut. Lib. de Incarn. cap. 27. Socin. Tract. de Deo, & Contra Wier. & alibi passim. ⁴ *Flatum ex ore Animalis expressum.* p. 455. ⁵ *Indicavit Spiritum Sanctum ejusque à Deo & Christo Emanationem seu Emissionem, afflatui sive spiraculo esse similem,* Proleg. de Spiritu Sancto Ibid.



cannot well agree to qualities, but must suppose the thing to which they are ascribed to be a substance; such as are *Local motion, Bodily shape, division and the like*: to reconcile therefore these seeming differences he is of Opinion, that the Spirit of God consider'd abstractedly in it self, is a meere quality; but yet this vertue may be impressed upon, and conveighed into some subtile and coelestial matter, & *ejus naturæ valde congruæ*, which is agreeable to its nature, *Ibid.* As we find the vital energy of the Soul communicated first to the *Animal Spirits*, and by them to all the other parts of the Body: and as we find the influences of the *Cælestial Bodies*, and qualities of *Terrestrial ones, Heat, Light and Odors*, conveighed in some subtile effluvium's, from the Bodies in which they are, into the Air, and some other subjects at a great distance. So saith he, by the Spirit of God is sometimes meant that ¹ tenuious matter which contains a divine quality in it, and by which it is conveighed into the minds of men: and in this sense he conceives the spirit of God, may be called a *Corporeal substance*, which hath extension, and is capable of division, as other Bodies tho spiritual are².

And by this notion he thinks he hath found out an easy way, to solve the former difficulties concerning the *Local motion* of the Holy Ghost, and particularly, his descent upon our Saviour at the time of his Baptism, and upon the Apostles in the *day of Pentecost*. Of his being poured out, of his being given, sometimes in measure, and sometimes without it: of his being divided and distributed and the like: which tho we interpret of the *gifts*, he doth of the *nature and essence of the Holy Ghost*, which according to this account he gives of it, may like other *steams and vapors* be carry'd here and there, and may be divided and distributed in greater and lesser quantities as there is occasion. And thus God took some part of this *Cælestial matter*, which contained that divine vertue with which *Moses* was endued, and put it into the 70 Elders *Numb. 11. 25.*

¹ *Materia subtilis, quæ qualitatem divinam in se habet, & per quam in hominum pectora deferri solet. Ibid. p. 476.* ² *Islo modo Spiritum Sanctum substantiam quandam esse, eamque corpoream non est negandum, Ibid.*

and in the same sense *Elisha* had a double portion of the Spirit of *Elias*, that is, of that divine steam and vapor which enabled him to do wonders.

Now if we shall further enquire what that Coelestial matter is, by which this divine quality which he makes to be the Holy Ghost, is conveyed and distributed among men; he hath not determined, but hath left it to the Readers discretion to conjecture: tho he hath given sufficient intimation how he would have him govern his Opinion. For in the other instances which he produces, the quality and the effluvia, proceed from the same subject; and he gives you no limitation, no caution in the least to think otherwise in this case: it is plain that some of his friends as he tells us, were of that Opinion, that the Spirit of God, was nothing but an *Emanation*, a *tenuous steam flowing from the very substance of God*, as the breath doth out of our mouths and nostrils: *quam sententiam*, saith he, *in medio relinquimus*; he will not give you his Opinion in this case, it being but fit that in *matters of Religion*, every man should be left to his own freedom, and therefore he fairly leaves you to your own. It is plain, if he were not himself of that Opinion, yet he thought there was no harm in it; otherwise he would have given his Reader some caution about it, which he hath not in the least done.

And now we are come to the *Bottom*, or if you please, to the very *dregs of Socinianism*, and that which is the true cause and source of all those *extravagant*, and indeed *Blasphemous* Notions which these men have of *Allmighty God*: who in their most refined and exalted speculations, cannot raise their thoughts to conceive any substance above matter. It is true, they call God a *Spirit*, but it is as certain that they mean a *spiritual Body*; as appears by what *Crellius* tells us when he comes to describe God, and to give the ² definition of a *Spirit* which is contained in that

1 *Crell. Proleg. de Spiritu Sancto*, p. 1. *Substantia subtilissima Halitui Oris Analoga, & quemadmodum ille ab Ore Emanat, ita Spiritus iste à Deo.* 2 *Deus est Spiritus Æternus; Spiritum autem cum nominamus, substantiam intelligimus ab omni crassitie, qualem in Corporibus oculorum arbitrio subjectis cernimus, alienam. Hoc sensu Angelos dicimus spiritus, & aerem licet sensibus quibusdam, ut tactui patentem, & alia corpora huic similia.* Lib. de Deo, & Attrib. Cap. 15.

description. When we call God a Spirit, saith he, we mean a substance free from all that *thick gross matter* which is the *object of our senses* shall I say? no that's too much, but which can *terminate our sight*; for a Spirit tho it be *invisible*, you must know it may be *palpable*; and such is the aer saith he, to which the word Spirit is a *genus*, common to it, to God and Angels¹: each of which are spirits, but that which is most subtile is likewise most spirituous.

And by this explication of the nature of a spirit, *Crellius* who calls God a spirit, and *Socinus* who plainly thought he was none, (as appears by his² forced and perverse Interpretation of those words of Christ *Jo. 4. 24.* which contain as plain and clear a declaration of this great truth, as could be expressed in words,) may very easily be reconciled. For whereas the *Master* denies God to be a spirit, he might by spirit mean an *incorporeal, immaterial being*; and the *Scholar* by acknowledging him to be one, did not intend to exclude *matter from his constitution*; but that he was not composed of such *thick gross parts of matter* as our Bodies are, which can terminate the sight; but of matter of a more *tenuous and refined Contexture*, more *subtile* perhaps, but of the *same nature* with Aer or Æther.

And from hence result all their *Impious Opinions* about God, in opposition to his Immensity, simplicity, Omnipresence: Judging of their Maker by themselves; of his thoughts by their thoughts, of his waies by their waies, of his dealings with men by their own foolish passions: and in short, measuring all his *Glorious and Incomprehensible perfections*, by their own narrow and shallow conceptions of sensible objects. Hence it is that we have those bold assertions of *Vorstius*⁴. *Deus non est infinitus, nec in essendo nec in operando. Infinita virtus non est in Deo. Immen-*

¹ Quorum unumquodque hoc nomen tanto magis sortitur, quanto est subtilius, Ibid.

² Vid. Vorst. Not. ad Disp. 3. de Natura Dei p. 200. ³ Non est fortasse eorum verborum sententia, quam plerique omnes arbitrantur, [Deum scil. esse spiritum:] neque enim subaudiendum esse dicat aliquis verbum est, quasi vox πνεύμα Recto casu accipienda sit: sed deo xpo repetendum verbum ἔστιν, quod paulo ante præcessit; & πνεύμα, quarto casu accipiendum, ita ut sententia sit, Deum quærere & postulare Spiritum. Frag. Disp. de Ador. Christi cum Christiano Franken p. 778. ⁴ Ibid. p. 234, 235.

fitas seu infinitas est αδύνατον. To be Infinite is impossible, and therefore so far from denoting a perfection, that it implies a plain contradiction. And among other Arguments which he makes use of to prove God not to be Infinite, this is remarkable *Ibid. p. 237.* Because God at present, saith he, is seen by the Angels, and shall be so hereafter by us, with our Bodily Eyes; and therefore not Infinite. For what is so cannot be comprehended by any sense, as he rightly upon this supposition argues: *Quia debet esse proportio inter objectum percipiendum; & personam percipientem:* and whereas it may be objected that the *Beatifick vision* respects the *inward speculation* of the mind, and not the *external perception* of the Eyes; some indeed so interpret it, saith he, *Sed nescio an sacris literis consentaneum sit; certe magnam futuræ nostræ felicitatis partem hac explicatione tollere videntur.*

Now if God be finite, it must further follow, and is plainly acknowledged by these men, *that magnitude and extension, and a true local presence* may and must be ascribed to God: and this is so far from being by them looked upon to be derogatory to the nature and perfection of God; that the contrary notion is scouted by them, not only as false, but as absurd and ridiculous, which asserts such a presence of God, as obliges us to believe him not be confined to any certain place, neither to have any parts commensurate to the parts of that place in which he is. For this if any thing must be the meaning of *'Episcopus's Atomica & Atopica essentiae divinae praesentia;* which he rails and exclaims against, and can scarce think of without horror and Astonishment.

But further, if *Local presence* be ascribed to God, I think *Local motion* may with good reason be so likewise; forasmuch as it may be more honourable to God to Imagine that he may sometimes change, then that he should allwaies be Immoveably fixed and confined to one certain place. Lastly if *extension* may be attributed to God, and such an extension as was said before, which hath its certain *bounds and limits*, by an unavoidable consequence, *Figure* must be ascribed to him also: forasmuch

as figure doth naturally and necessarily result from the *termination of extension*: this being the definition of a figure, *quæ sub aliquo vel aliquibus terminis comprehenditur*.

And now at length we see what a blessed notion of Almighty God the *Socinians* have furnished us with; how *scandalous* and *dishonourable* to God, how *repugnant to piety*, how opposite to *right reason*, and to those sober and just apprehensions which *that* hath furnished many wise heathens with, who I am afraid may one day rise up in Judgement against these men and condemn them.

It may be now time to draw towards a conclusion of this Discourse, therefore I shall briefly summe up what hath been said upon this subject: that the Readers memory may be refreshed with the account which hath bin given him, both of what the Scripture affirms of God, and what the *Socinians* say of him.

The Scriptures have informed us that our God is *Infinite*, they say he is *Finite*, ours is *Omnipresent*, theirs *Limited* and confined to a certain place: ours *Immutable*, theirs *Liable to change*; ours is *naturally just*, theirs *contingently so*: ours *necessarily* concerned in the government of the World, and taking care of humane affairs; theirs might, like *Epicurus* his Deity, sit at ease in the enjoyment of his own happyneſs, leaving the world to the *conduct of chance*; and men to the *guidance* of that which is *equally uncertain*, their own giddy and unstable passions; neither giving them *Laws* for the regulating of their actions, nor assigning any *punishments* to the violation of them. Our God is *Omniscient*, theirs *ignorant of future and contingent events*: ours *without parts or passions*, theirs *compounded of one*, and *lyable* to the other; even to those which argue the greatest weakness and infirmity, and which some of the Philosophers thought inconsistent with the bravery and resolution of a wise and virtuous man. In short, our God consists of three blessed and glorious persons, subsisting in the same undivided essence: They deny the divine nature of the Son, and yet by an unpardonable contradiction, say that he is *a true God*; and disown the personality of the Holy Ghost.

From all which I think it will appear very evident, what

we undertook to make out at the beginning of this discourse, that the *Object* of their Religion and ours is different; and that will go a great way to prove that the *Religions themselves* are so too. In short, the difference between us is not so small as some ignorant people may *imagine*, and some crafty and designing persons may *pretend*; among whom I cannot but reckon *Curcellæus*, who most falsely and impudently against common sense and reason, and therefore one might be tempted to imagine, against his *Conscience*, would persuade the world to believe, that the difference between us and the *Socinians*, in the point of the Divinity of the son of God, was a *λογμαχία*, a contention about words rather than any *real difference*, in a matter of faith: which is quite contrary to the notion that either the Orthodox or the *Socinians* have of this matter: who lay a greater and truer stress upon their Opinions, than this man doth, who pretends to bless the world with a discovery of what no body ever knew before.

But I believe the Reader who hath perused the foregoing discourse, will be induced to believe that either the *Socinians* or we are in a very great mistake, the distance between us being wider then that between *Heaven and Earth*: and indeed no less then between *Finite and Infinite*. So that upon a true state of things, I believe it will be found that our Opinions are not only seemingly *inconsistent*, but absolutely *irreconcilable*; forasmuch as in order to reconcile them, we must part with the *Infinite nature* of God the Father, and the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And surely that man must be very *fond*, nay he must be *mad* for peace, that can be content, to sacrifice both *Truth* and the *Divine Author* of it, in order to purchase it. Once indeed our Blessed Saviour came down among men, and offered up himself upon the Cross in order to reconcile the two greatest *Enemies*, God and Man: but it is too much in all *Conscience* which is expected of us, that we should make a new *Oblation* of our Saviour: and not only as the Jews

1 Curcell. Rel. Christianæ Inst. Lib. 2. Cap. 21. p. 78. *Quæ Confessio, si rem ipsam potius quam verba aut phrasés spectes, parum ab Orthodoxorum sententia differre videtur.*

did, nail his Body to the Cross, but *sacrifice even his Divinity*, to compose the differences in Religion.

But perhaps some may say the *Socinians* are men of more *reason* and *moderation*, then to desire us presently to part with all our Religion to gratifie them: They only plead *for liberty*, and in order to their joyning with us, that we would remove those *obstacles* of communion, *viz. Articles, Creeds, Confessions of Faith*, some *useless expressions* in our Common Prayer, which contain too plain and *uncharitable* acknowledgments of the Trinity; which hinder many pious, useful and excellent persons from coming to our Churches. Why should we not strip our Faith of all those larger and unwarrantable explications which Councils and Fathers have made of it; and reduce all to the *naked expressions* of Scripture: that is, content our selves with a few Ambiguous words, (which the perverse and subtile Interpretations of Hereticks have made so) and let every man abound in his own sense.

They believe Christ to be the Son of God, so as to be true God likewise: what need we trouble our selves or them with the word *Consubstantial*; pity it is, that a word, nay a *Letter* should divide men in their Opinions and Affections. To all which, tho I have a great deal that I could answer, yet at present all that I shall say shall be this: That the *Socinians* are *wise* men, persons of a deep reach; but they must not think that all the rest of the World *are fools*. It were too much in all Conscience to desire us to part with all at first: but they know what advantage to make of our Concessions: if they can perswade us with that foolish woman *Prov. 14. 1.* to pull down our house with our own hands, it will save them the toyl and drudgery of so doing: at least if they can prevail with us to demolish our *Outworks*, then they will be able as with greater ease, so likewise with greater hopes of success, to *attack the main Fort*. In short, the *Ancient Creeds and Confessions*, and those *Ancient words* in which the Doctrine of Faith hath bin conveyed down to us; are only 'an *Hedge of Thornes*, as they have bin truly and pertinently styled, with which the Christian Faith hath bin guarded

against the designs of *disguised Hereticks*, and I hope they will prick their fingers, who shall attempt the removing of them.

And thus much shall serve to be said upon the first Head, of the great difference there is between what the Scriptures affirm, and what the *Socinians* say of the great object of our Religion God Allmighty. And if there were only this in the case, I hope it might prove sufficient to guard any pious well meaning Christian from the *Infection* of their Impious Opinions, which furnish him with notions so *dishonorable* and injurious to his maker: and who by denying the blessed Trinity, and the Divinity of our Saviour, have subverted the very foundations of Christianity, altered the whole Oeconomy of mans Salvation: so that they and we must go different waies to Heaven, as having neither the same means of Grace, nor the same hopes of Glory.

I should now proceede to shew the Opposition between the *Socinian* tenets, and the other parts of the Christian Doctrine, which are thereby contradicted, and overthrown. But this must be referred till a time of further and better leasure: But by this Taste which I have given the Reader of *Socinianism*, I may have reason to hope that he will be of the Opinion, that Religion is like Wine, the older, the more excellent and desireable. And therefore that no man of *wisdome*, or indeed of *common sense*, who hath not *lost all Relish of divine things*, when he hath tasted of the old Religion, will straightly desire the New, because he will find that the Old is much better.

Now to the Holy Blessed and undivided Trinity, three Persons and one God, be all Honour, Glory, and Praise both now and for evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.